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New York

President: Mr. Eliasson ..... (Sweden)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Expression of sympathy to the Government and the people of Jordan in connection with the terrorist attacks in Amman

The President: I would like to extend our sympathy to all those affected by the abhorrent terrorist attacks on three hotels in Amman, Jordan yesterday. On behalf of the Assembly, I offer our deepest condolences to the Government and the people of Jordan and to the families and friends of all those killed and injured.

Those attacks are a further stark reminder of the importance and the urgency of the work we are doing to adopt a comprehensive convention on terrorism.

Agenda items 9 and 117

Report of the Security Council (A/60/2)

Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters

The President: With regard to agenda item 9, in accordance with Article 15, paragraph 1, of the Charter, the General Assembly considers the annual report submitted by the Security Council pursuant to Article 24, paragraph 3, of the Charter. The report of the Security Council was issued as General Assembly document A/60/2.

Concerning agenda item 117, members will recall that, upon recommendation of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council, the General Assembly decided to continue its consideration of this item during the present session, with a view to facilitating the process of reaching general agreement.

Furthermore, in the 2005 World Summit Outcome (*resolution 60/1*), our heads of State and Government expressed support for early reform of the Security Council as an essential element of the overall effort to reform the United Nations. Our leaders aimed at making the Security Council more broadly representative, efficient and transparent in order to further enhance its effectiveness and the legitimacy and the implementation of its decisions.

Our leaders also called for adaptation of the working methods of the Security Council to increase participation in, and the transparency of, its work and enhance accountability to the membership. They further committed themselves to pursue efforts with a view to achieving a decision on Security Council reform and requested the General Assembly to review progress thereon by the end of 2005.

As stated in my letter of 3 November, this joint debate offers an opportunity to Member States to give input to the proposed review. I therefore encourage members to avail themselves of this occasion, and I am

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looking forward to hearing members' comments, proposals and ideas on this important matter.

I now give the floor to the President of the Security Council, Mr. Andrey Denisov, to introduce the report of the Security Council.

Mr. Denisov (Russian Federation), President of the Security Council (*spoke in Russian*): On behalf of all members of the Security Council, I would like to offer my congratulations to you, Mr. Eliasson, on your election as President of the General Assembly at its sixtieth session. It is my sincere hope that during your tenure relations between the General Assembly and the Security Council will be further strengthened, as we work together to promote the purposes and principles of the United Nations, consistent with the Charter.

In my capacity as President of the Security Council for November 2005, I have the privilege to introduce the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly (*A/60/2*), covering the period from 1 August 2004 to 31 July 2005.

The report shows that the Security Council's working agenda during the reporting period has been extremely full and intense. Two hundred and twenty-nine formal meetings have been held, 195 of which were public. The Council adopted 61 resolutions and 58 presidential statements.

The range of issues considered by the Council has remained very wide, covering all the major aspects of the maintenance of international peace and security. The report gives a comprehensive description of Council activities, and I would like to highlight some of the key issues on which the Council has focused.

Issues related to the settlement of regional conflicts and to ensuring stability in Africa have remained high on the agenda of the Security Council. The Council responded to worsening situations in Côte d'Ivoire, Darfur and the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and has sought to encourage and consolidate continuing progress in strengthening peace and stability in Sierra-Leone, Liberia, Burundi and Guinea-Bissau. The Security Council undertook a mission to Central Africa and focused on several issues affecting Africa, such as the cross-border issues in West Africa, Africa's food crisis as a threat to peace and security, post-conflict peacebuilding, the threat of small arms and the protection of civilians in armed conflict. In addition, the Council oversaw the gradual winding down of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), at one point the largest United Nations peacekeeping operation, which is to be replaced by an integrated United Nations Office in Sierra Leone. That is an innovation that should make the United Nations contribution to peacebuilding even more effective and establish a model for other countries emerging from conflict.

On 18 and 19 November 2004, the Council held an extraordinary session in Nairobi, its fourth outside the United Nations Headquarters since the Council began meeting in New York. This was done in order to re-energize the Sudanese peace negotiations and put an end to one of the most protracted conflicts in Africa. Also in Nairobi, the Security Council held a meeting aimed at strengthening the institutional relationship with the African Union. In a presidential statement (*S/PRST/2004/43*), Council members welcomed the progress made in the national reconciliation process of Somalia.

The Council has continued its support for the ongoing political transition in Iraq. In August 2004, the Council unanimously renewed the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) for another 12-month period. UNAMI's support was vital to the success of the January 2005 parliamentary elections, through which the Iraqi people elected the Transitional Government of Iraq. The Council has repeatedly stressed the importance of reconciliation, national unity and an inclusive political process.

Events in Lebanon during the period under review also called for close Security Council attention. The Council adopted resolution 1559 (2004) of 2 September 2004, reaffirming its call for the strict respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and political independence of Lebanon and calling upon all remaining foreign forces to withdraw from Lebanon. On 19 October 2004, the Council adopted a presidential statement (*S/PRST/2004/36*), requesting the Secretary-General to report to the Council on the implementation of resolution 1559 (2004) every six months.

The Council has also acted to support the Lebanese investigation into the terrorist act that resulted in the death of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri on 14 February 2005. Following the attack, the Council adopted a presidential statement (*S/PRST/2005/4*) strongly condemning the murder and

requesting the Secretary-General to follow the situation in Lebanon closely. Following the report of the Secretary-General's mission of inquiry into the attack, the Council, on 7 April, unanimously adopted resolution 1595 (2005), setting up an International Independent Investigation Commission to assist the Lebanese authorities in their investigation of all aspects of the assassination of the former Prime Minister.

The Council has paid close attention to other issues in the Middle East, Afghanistan and the Balkan region. It has closely monitored the situation in Haiti in order, inter alia, to ensure a secure and stable environment in which the electoral process can take place. The Council also undertook a mission to that country in conjunction with the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti of the Economic and Social Council.

In the reporting period, as a result of the sustainable progress in the peace processes in Timor-Leste and in Bougainville, Papua New Guinea, the Council closed the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) and the United Nations Observer Mission in Bougainville. Following the completion of the UNMISET mandate on 20 May 2005, the Council established a one-year follow-on special political mission, the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste.

By its resolution 1590 (2005) of 24 March 2005, the Council established a new peacekeeping operation, the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS).

In addition to addressing specific ongoing conflicts and crises, the Security Council continued to have thematic discussions related to the Council's work, which allowed for fruitful deliberations with the larger United Nations membership. The Council had open debates on children and armed conflict, women and peace and security, small arms, United Nations peacekeeping operations, post-conflict peacebuilding, the protection of civilians in armed conflict, justice and the rule of law, and civilian aspects of conflict management and peacebuilding.

The serious and continuing threat to international peace and security posed by terrorism remained a top priority of the Council, mainly through the work of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) and the Committees established pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1540 (2004), as well as through the cooperation and coordination among those Committees. During the period under review, the Council began to receive joint briefings by the Committee Chairmen.

The Counter-Terrorism Committee continued to work intensively to fulfil its mandate as set out in resolution 1373 (2001), including through visits to States and strengthened methodology for the identification of States' needs for technical assistance. It also continued to develop cooperation with international, regional and subregional organizations. The Working Group established pursuant to resolution 1566 (2004) met to consider practical measures and procedures for tackling terrorists not on the Al-Qaida/Taliban list, as well additional means to support the victims of terrorist acts.

By resolution 1617 (2005), adopted on 29 July 2005, the Council improved the sanctions regime with respect to Al-Qaida and the Taliban and other individuals, groups, undertakings and entities associated with them.

The Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) continued its efforts to strengthen the international community's capacity to prevent weapons of mass destruction from falling into the hands of non-State actors.

Last year saw a further increase in transparency in the Security Council's work. Council members sought to hold as many public meetings as possible and regularly organized thematic debates and Arria-formula meetings in order to enhance our collective understanding of the key issues and to hear the views of non-Council members, independent experts and representatives of civil society. A proactive and responsible approach to transparency is very important for the Security Council, which is deeply interested in strengthening dialogue and interaction with all members of the United Nations. To that end, Security Council missions abroad made efforts to meet non-governmental organizations and civil society, as well as Governments and other parties in the countries visited.

The Security Council continued to develop cooperation among the Council, the troop-contributing countries and the Secretariat. Work on the basis of resolution 1353 (2001) and the note by the President of the Council in document S/2002/56, dated 14 January 2002, focused on important peacekeeping issues, including ways to improve the planning, conduct, support and management of peacekeeping operations,

and on the holding of in-depth and interactive discussions about both the immediate and underlying problems facing specific United Nations peacekeeping operations.

The Security Council, in line with the World Summit Outcome (*resolution 60/1*), is continuing to adapt its working methods to make it more effective, including by having a more open and productive relationship with Member States not on the Security Council and other countries.

The Council recognizes the crucial contribution of troop-contributing countries to United Nations peacekeeping missions under its authority. The Council undertook, inter alia, through its Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations, to involve, as appropriate, troop-contributing countries and other interested countries more effectively in the consideration of issues relating to United Nations peacekeeping operations and will continue to do so in future.

The Council will also continue to adapt its consultations with non-Council members with reference to other aspects of its activities. For example, the Council's subsidiary bodies dealing with sanctions will continue their dialogue with interested countries, in particular, with neighbouring countries, in order better to assess the effect of such measures and to ensure more effective enforcement of those measures, such as arms embargoes.

In conclusion, on behalf of all Council members, I would like to thank the Secretary-General and the members of the Secretariat for their professionalism and invaluable support, without which the Council could not discharge its duties.

The President: I thank the President of the Security Council, His Excellency Mr. Andrey Denisov, for his introduction of the report of the Council. I particularly thank him for his words expressing the hope that relations between the General Assembly and the Security Council will be further strengthened as we work together to promote the purposes and principles of the United Nations, consistent with the Charter. I also welcome his words on having a more open and productive relationship with non-Council members and others, including troop-contributing countries and interested countries, in particular neighbouring countries, affected by sanctions regimes. That dialogue is extremely important for the General Assembly.

I earlier welcomed the President of the forty-sixth session, Mr. Samir Shihabi, but I see another president in the Hall, the President of the fifty-second session. I welcome Mr. Hennadiy Udovenko, who is in the Hall today.

Mr. Hackett (Barbados): My delegation welcomes the opportunity to participate in the joint debate on agenda items 9 and 117, on the Report of the Security Council and on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters. I am making this statement on behalf of the member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), that are Member States of the United Nations.

Before I begin my statement, however, I would like, on behalf of the CARICOM member States, to offer our deepest sympathy to the Government and people of Jordan, and especially to the families of the victims, on the terrorist attacks that took place in Amman yesterday.

CARICOM would like to thank His Excellency Mr. Andrey Denisov, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation and current President of the Security Council, for his detailed presentation of the report of the Security Council. The report is clear and comprehensive and we have just a few comments to make on it at the present time.

I also wish to express our appreciation for the presentation of the report of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council. In that regard, we are particularly pleased to offer special congratulations to Ambassadors Paulette Bethel of the Bahamas and Christian Wenaweser of Liechtenstein, the two Vice-Chairs of the Working Group, for their excellent work and untiring efforts in leading the consultations on working methods.

Again in this year's report, we see that Africa has figured at the forefront of the Council's agenda, although there were a number of other crises in other regions of the world that consumed much of the attention of the Council. We compliment the Council for its decision to hold an extraordinary session in Nairobi in order to meet closer to the centre of the conflict in the Sudan. We believe that such initiatives as well as strengthening the institutional relationship between the African Union and the Security Council,

bode well for closer and more effective collaboration between the United Nations and Africa in seeking to maintain peace and security in that region.

Member States have repeatedly called for more openness and transparency on the part of the Security Council. CARICOM was, therefore, especially appreciative of the opportunity that the Security Council provided for Member States to discuss the situation in Haiti by holding an open debate on Haiti on 12 January of this year. CARICOM member States participated in the debate and were, hopefully, able to provide a regional perspective that assisted the Council as it sought to reaffirm its long-term commitment to Haiti and underline the importance of national reconciliation, security and economic development to the country's stability.

CARICOM further welcomed the Security Council's mission to Haiti from 13 to 16 April 2005 in conjunction with the Economic and Social Council's Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti. We are convinced that that visit and the Security Council's continued engagement in Haiti permitted the Council on 22 June of this year to adopt unanimously resolution 1608 (2005), which not only extended the mandate of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) to February 2006, but also further increased the Mission's strength by 800 military personnel and 275 civilian police.

CARICOM wishes to take this opportunity to comment on another aspect of the Security Council's report that has affected many countries but has particularly impacted small, resource-deficient States, such as ours. I refer to the issue of counter-terrorism, which continues to be a matter of top priority for the Council.

The reporting obligations and responsibilities under the various counter-terrorism resolutions, while accepted as necessary, have nonetheless proven to be onerous to most of our States. We therefore welcome the initial efforts made by the various subcommittees of the Council to provide expertise and advice to Member States lacking the knowledge, experience or resources to implement the several resolutions, but would plead for even greater assistance, if we are expected to be able to fulfil all of our reporting obligations in a timely manner. Furthermore, we encourage the Security Council to consider ways of consolidating State reporting requirements, as stated by our Heads of State and Government in the outcome document of the September Summit.

Turning now to the reform of the Security Council, CARICOM is disappointed that the General Assembly has been unable, to date, to reach agreement on the issue of an increase in the membership of the Security Council. CARICOM has been consistent in its call for an increase in membership of the Council and particularly for greater representation from the developing countries and especially from States from the African continent. CARICOM believes that the matter of expansion remains critically important and that we all need to redouble our efforts to reach effective agreement on the issue in the near future.

CARICOM is, however, convinced that comprehensive reform of the Security Council is primarily and fundamentally grounded in reform of the working methods of the Council, and we had hoped for greater progress in the work of the Open-ended Working Group.

Critical to the reform of the Security Council is the need for greater transparency and openness in the working methods of the Council, and we therefore support the discussions that have been recently initiated here in New York, through the draft resolution on working methods put forward by the delegations of Costa Rica, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Singapore and Switzerland.

CARICOM is also heartened that there is widespread acceptance of the view that the Security Council should be accountable to the General Assembly. Committed as we are to the primacy of multilateral diplomacy, we believe that such an approach would be the correct one. We further support the call for more frequent open debates of the Security Council to allow for greater inclusiveness and participation of all non-Member States and for more frequent and comprehensive Council briefings to non-members as a means of keeping all delegations fully informed of Security Council activities. CARICOM also supports increased formal interaction between the Council and troop-contributing countries as a necessary aid to the decision-making process on the establishment, conduct, review and termination of peacekeeping operations.

CARICOM is of the view that, whereas sanctions may at times constitute a legitimate and necessary tool for the enforcement by the Council of measures to

maintain international peace and security, we believe they should be imposed only as an absolute last resort and should be time-bound and accompanied by a clear exit strategy. Furthermore, CARICOM stresses that special care and attention should be given to the design and implementation of sanctions in order to avoid, or at least minimize, their negative impact on civilian populations.

Few questions on the issue of Security Council reform have proven to be as intractable as that question of the veto. CARICOM believes that the veto is an anachronism; and ideally it should be limited in its use with a view to its eventual elimination. In the meantime, we agree that the veto should be used with utmost restraint and should be limited to actions taken under Chapter VII of the Charter.

In conclusion, I wish to point out that in the 2005 summit outcome document (resolution 60/1), heads of State and Government agreed that early reform of the Security Council is an essential element of our overall effort to reform the United Nations in order to make it more broadly representative, efficient and transparent.

CARICOM believes that Member States need to continue to be seized of the issue if we are to implement that aspect of the summit outcome document. CARICOM member States therefore stand ready to participate in the consultations, which we believe should be continued during the sixtieth session.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): May I begin by expressing Pakistan's condemnation of the dastardly terrorist attacks that took place in Amman yesterday. The people and the Government of Pakistan convey their profound grief and condolences to the Government and the people of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and to the families of the victims.

We are considering once again the important issue of reform of the Security Council, together with the Council's report to the General Assembly (A/60/2). The discussion is taking place in the wake of the 2005 summit and in the midst of the process being led by you, Mr. President, to implement the summit's decisions.

The rationale and justification for reform of the Security Council is clear: the Council should be reformed to make it more representative, more transparent, more accountable and more effective. However, there are significant differences on how those objectives can be achieved. As we open this debate, the positions of all parties on the reform of the Security Council are well known and have been reaffirmed in recent days.

The position of the Uniting for Consensus group, which was circulated during the last session in document A/59/L.68, is also known to the entire membership. The members of the group continue to believe that our proposal offers the most promising basis to evolve a consensus, especially on the issue of equitable representation on the Security Council.

Let me briefly reiterate the virtues of the Uniting for Consensus proposal: First, our proposal is fair and equitable. It respects the principle of the sovereign equality of States and does not discriminate between Member States.

Secondly, our proposal will increase the opportunity for all Member States, including the small and medium-sized States to secure more representation on the Security Council.

Thirdly, it will enhance the accountability of Security Council members through the democratic mechanism of periodic elections and, if agreed, re-elections.

Fourthly, our proposal is simple. It proposes a direct Charter amendment for approval by the Assembly.

Fifthly, the Uniting for Consensus proposal is realistic. Since it can accommodate the interests and positions of all Member States, this proposal, if approved, is likely to secure the required ratifications, including the necessary ratification of the five permanent members of the Security Council.

And finally, the greatest virtue of the proposal is its flexibility. It can accommodate, through variable arrangements in each region, the aspirations and interests of the majority of the membership including regional groups such as the African Group.

We respect and understand Africa's desire for equitable representation on the Security Council. Africa is striving to redress a historic injustice. We believe that the Uniting for Consensus proposal is entirely compatible with the African approach. Both our position and that of the African Union is based on the principle that each region should be in a position to

determine its own specific arrangement for representation on the Council.

Africa's demand for two permanent seats, in our view, is different from other proposals which seek permanent membership for individual States. Africa, as we see it, seeks permanent seats for the entire region of Africa. We note also that against the two empowered seats sought by Africa, representation on the Council could be from two or, through rotation, a larger number of African States, under arrangements to be made by the Africans themselves. In our view, rotation is the best means to ensure the representation of regional interests, including those of Africa, as well as to provide greater opportunities to all States to secure more frequent membership of the Security Council.

Since our proposal is based on a regional approach, it could also accommodate the interests of subregional groups, such as the Arab League, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and Central America. Other Groups, such as the Organization of the Islamic Conference, could also secure assured representation against the seats allocated to the regions of Africa or Asia. Moreover, through the provision made for possible re-election, the Uniting for Consensus proposal offers the possibility of long-term and even continued membership for some States if they are nominated for that purpose by their respective regions.

We are all aware that agreement within the general membership on the issue of representation on an enlarged Security Council will require difficult and patient negotiations. Member States must be allowed the necessary time and space to reconcile their positions and to evolve a solution acceptable to the entire membership. It is therefore essential to engage in dialogue and constructive negotiation to achieve an equitable and widely acceptable solution.

Meanwhile, we also need to give consideration to the other aspects of Security Council reform, namely, its working methods — the so-called cluster II issues. For a large majority of Member States, especially small and medium States, the reform of the Security Council implies, first and foremost, an improvement in its working methods. The General Assembly's Open-ended Working Group has reached provisional agreement on a large number of proposals to improve the Council's working methods. Some of those proposals are being implemented, but the majority still await translation into the practice of the Council.

I would like to thank Ambassador Andrey Denisov, President of the Security Council, for presenting the Council's report to the General Assembly. The quality and content of the report have improved. The present report provides a good statistical record and a ready reference regarding issues under the Council's consideration. However, it does not contribute to a better understanding by the general membership of how the Council has dealt with specific situations and the ways in which it has reached its decisions. In that context, I would like to reiterate Pakistan's concern about the Council's encroachment on issues such as those considered in so-called thematic debates, which lie more appropriately within the jurisdiction of the General Assembly or the Economic and Social Council.

Pakistan supports the full implementation of Assembly resolution 58/126, in particular its call for Security Council reports to the General Assembly on specific topics, briefings to the President of the General Assembly by the President of the Security Council and joint meetings between the Presidents of the General Assembly, the Security Council and Economic and Social Council. Those mechanisms should be institutionalized as soon as possible.

However, the reform of the Council's working methods must go beyond such improvements in its operating processes. Openness, transparency and inclusiveness should be introduced in the working modalities of the Security Council and its subsidiary bodies, especially the sanctions committees and those dealing with generic issues such as terrorism and non-proliferation, which are of direct concern to the general membership. The Council's work must cease to be conducted in virtual secrecy from the general membership. As envisaged in the Security Council's provisional rules of procedure, most of the Council's work should be conducted in public meetings, as was the case until the end of the cold war. Informal consultations should be the exception, rather than the rule they have become. Member States that are most directly concerned in an issue should be able to participate in both the open and the informal meetings of the Council. Draft resolutions and proposals circulated informally in the Council should be available to all Member States, at least before they are provided to the media.

In the context of improving the Council's working methods, Pakistan is sympathetic to most of the proposals contained in the informal paper circulated by Costa Rica, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Singapore and Switzerland. The areas covered in the annex to the paper — the Council's relationship with the General Assembly and other principal organs, implementation of Council decisions, the working of subsidiary bodies, the use of the veto, the conduct of peacekeeping operations and the integration of new Council members — are all vital to ensure transparency, inclusiveness and accountability in the Council's work. My delegation looks forward to an early opportunity to offer our suggestions and views to enrich the proposals circulated by those five delegations, and to evolve agreement on them.

Pakistan believes that any decision on the reform of the Security Council should be adopted by consensus, or at least through the widest possible agreement. Our reasons for taking that position are clear. Reform of the Council is an important issue. It impinges on the national security interests of every Member State. Any precipitate move to secure a decision by a vote would revive regional tensions and resurrect divisions within the Organization. It would once again eclipse, and possibly derail, the rest of the United Nations reform agenda. It could halt the heartening progress we are making, or expect to make, on the establishment of a Peacebuilding Commission, terrorism, the Human Rights Council and, most important, the implementation of the development agenda.

Moreover, any proposal for Security Council reform that is adopted by a divisive vote is unlikely to be translated into reality, as it will not obtain the ratification of two thirds of the membership, including the five permanent members. Indeed, a divisive vote is likely to freeze the status quo in the Security Council and thus squander the opportunity for its early reform and democratization.

The President of the General Assembly has been mandated by the 2005 summit to conduct consultations on the issue of the reform of the Security Council and to report progress before the end of this session. We trust that, at the appropriate time, he will convene a meeting of the Open-ended Working Group on this issue and enable delegations to exchange views in order to further advance the possibilities for consensus on the important issue of Security Council reform, including the improvement of its working methods.

Mr. Al-Shamsi (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like, on behalf of the people and Government of the United Arab Emirates, to join the President and those who have spoken before me to express our sympathy and condolences to the Government and people of fraternal Jordan and to the families of the victims of the heinous terrorist attacks that took place last night in Amman, the capital of Jordan. We strongly condemn those acts.

On behalf of the delegation of the United Arab Emirates, I would also like to express our gratitude and appreciation to the Chairman and two Vice-Chairpersons of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and other Matters related to the Security Council for the valuable information contained in the Group's recent report (A/59/47). The report reflects the great efforts made towards reaching the consensus we all desire in the areas of strengthening international representation in the Security Council and enhancing transparency in executing its responsibilities with regard to maintaining international peace and security.

The last decade witnessed the launching of a comprehensive reform process, especially in the United Nations system, with a view to enabling it to keep up with the international changes and challenges that emerged after the end of the cold war, including the concept of a new world order based on the principles of partnership, democracy and the diverse interests of States and peoples.

Given the fact that the Security Council is a principal organ of the United Nations and has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security in accordance with Article 24 of the Charter, heads of States and Government were keen to reaffirm, during the Millennium Summit of the year 2000 and the High-level Plenary Meeting of the Assembly's sixtieth session, the importance of continuing and intensifying efforts to reform comprehensively the structure of the Council, improve its representative character, increase its efficiency and transparency, and strengthen its democratic character. That will help the Council to increase its effectiveness and legality as it implements its resolutions, which aim at establishing international peace and protecting

humankind from war, gross violations of human rights and other current threats facing the world.

When the Security Council was established in 1945, there were 51 Member States. Although the membership of the United Nations has now reached 191, the composition of the Council has not yet reflected that reality. Nor has it succeeded in representing the international community in a democratic and fair manner, a fact that has resulted in creating a political imbalance that undermines the transparency of the Council's resolutions regarding many important international issues. We therefore emphasize the need for the international community to carry out an essential and viable reform of the structure and working methods of the Security Council. That must include an increase in the Council's permanent and non-permanent members, in order to enable it to carry out its fundamental role of addressing the existing security threats and challenges facing our nations.

My delegation has carefully studied the recommendations of the Secretary-General and his High-level Panel on Threats Challenges and Change and has followed closely the special consultations of the General Assembly and the regional groups in the last few months, which dealt with initiatives, draft resolutions and proposals. We are concerned about the deep differences in the views of States in connection with the form and size of the Council. We therefore reaffirm our position calling for restructuring the membership of the Council in a manner more consistent with its current agenda, which has become more complex and which has exceeded the traditional security issues of the cold war era. In that context, we stress that the process of enlarging the membership of the Security Council should be based on the following three pillars.

First, the process of reforming and expanding the Security Council should be part of a common and integrated endeavour based on the principles of the sovereign equality of States and their equitable geographical representation on Council, in contrast to the biased and selective policy currently prevailing in that body.

Secondly, any increase in Council membership must address the issue of the underrepresentation of small and developing States in the Council.

Thirdly, Arab States, which include 22 countries and represent almost 12 per cent of the total membership of the United Nations, must be allocated a permanent seat in the Security Council. That seat should be filled on a rotating basis and in coordination among the Arab States, in accordance with the practices applied in the League of Arab States and in the context of the African and Asian Groups. Should that approach be adopted, it will strengthen the effectiveness of the participation of those countries in addressing the most complicated regional issues on the Council's agenda and in the joint efforts to maintain regional and international peace and security.

The United Arab Emirates notes with satisfaction the number of measures, albeit limited, taken in the last few years to improve some of the working methods of the Council, in particular as regards increasing the number of open meetings and inviting non-Council members to its debates, especially those participating in peacekeeping operations. Nevertheless, we are disappointed at the policy of double standards followed by the Council in addressing some of the issues on its agenda, specifically those pertaining to peace and security in the Middle East. That contradicts the Council's previous relevant resolutions. We therefore call for a serious, comprehensive and objective evaluation of the Council's working methods in order to enhance the institutional character and transparency of its procedures, working methods and decision-making standards. In that context, we call for the following measures.

First, the use of the right of the veto should be abolished or rationalized. That right has on many occasions inhibited the Council from finding fair and permanent solutions to many important issues in accordance with the principles of the Charter, resolutions of international legitimacy and the rule of relevant international laws.

Secondly, we call for the Council to take into consideration the interests of States whenever it adopts resolutions under Chapter VII of the Charter, which permits the imposition of economic sanctions on countries violating Council resolutions.

Thirdly, we call for non-Council members, especially those with direct or indirect interests in issues under discussion by the Council, to be permitted to participate in the Council's consultations in that regard.

Fourthly, we call for coordination between the Security Council, the General Assembly and regional groups to mobilize all potential ways and means to contain existing disputes and conflicts and to protect humankind from their dangerous consequences.

In conclusion, we hope that our deliberations on this item will lead to a convergence of views and to the strengthening of a constructive international understanding aimed at achieving the desired reform in the structure and working methods of the Security Council, in order to enable it to fully discharge its growing responsibilities in the maintenance of regional and international peace and security.

Mr. Almansoor (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, allow me to join the President in expressing our sympathy and condolences to the delegation of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and to the fraternal people of that country in connection with the heinous and dastardly terrorist bombings that took place yesterday in Amman, which took dozens of innocent lives. I pray to the Almighty to extend his mercy and succor to the victims and their families.

My delegation welcomes the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly contained in document A/60/2, which was presented to the Assembly by Ambassador Denisov, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation and this month's Council President. That report provides an overview of the Council's activities in the past year with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security.

With the vision it contains, that report provides Member States an opportunity to study and assess the Council's work, as well as its growing role in dealing with the various international issues falling within its purview. Member States must therefore scrutinize the report in order to be fully aware of actions taken within the Council, which, in accordance with the Charter, acts on behalf of all Member States. That is all the more important given that the important resolutions adopted by the Council place binding obligations on all Members.

There is no doubt that the Security Council has become the most active organ of the United Nations. Its role has in fact grown significantly in recent years, making the Council the most visible expression of United Nations activity in the world. Any failure by the Council to deal with the world's issues could therefore tarnish the image of the United Nations in world public opinion, which has reduced its perception of the Organization to the Security Council alone. For the sake of the Organization as a whole, we must correct that perception.

To set matters right, we assert that the roles of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council should not be diminished. Their important and major roles as two of the principal organs of the United Nations must be emphasized and brought to the fore; they are equal in importance to the Security Council. The importance of the roles of those two organs must not be diminished when it comes to addressing all international issues, be they political, economic or social.

Our world today is experiencing an evolving political climate. This era poses both a challenge and a test for the Organization, which must deal with them ably and efficiently. In addition to the ongoing threats that we have all failed to resolve, new challenges confront the Organization. Terrorism, which has become widespread and out of control, has affected all of us. We must deal with it in a concerted manner in order to address its root causes. The spread of deadly diseases has taken thousands of lives. In fact, the victims of such diseases outnumber the victims of war. That makes it incumbent upon us all to cooperate to deal with and eradicate those diseases. There are also other important issues facing us. As individual Members and as an Organization, we must deal with them together to find appropriate solutions.

My delegation is pleased to welcome the report of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council (A/59/47). We express our sincere thanks to Mr. Jean Ping, former President of the General Assembly, for his chairmanship of the Working Group, and his two Vice-Chairmen, the Permanent Representatives of the Bahamas and Liechtenstein, for their tireless efforts.

The question of the reform of the Security Council continues to be one of the main issues debated during the General Assembly's annual sessions. Many heads of State and Government expressed their Governments' opinions on this matter during the general debate that took place at the Assembly's High-level Plenary Meeting, from 14 to 16 September.

The Working Group is considering matters of extreme importance. The relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly, the relationship between the Security Council and the other principal organs of the United Nations, consultations with troop-contributing countries, matters relating to the work of sanctions committees and other subsidiary bodies of the Security Council, and the issue of the use of the power of the veto are all matters of great importance that must be clearly defined in order to avoid conflict among the competencies of the principal organs of the United Nations. We believe that the relationships among the various organs of the United Nations must be complementary and cooperative, as they are clearly regulated by the provisions of the Charter, which divides responsibilities and work among the organs. As Charter rules, those provisions must be respected and maintained, for they guarantee that there will be no conflict with regard to competencies and responsibilities, thus preventing encroachment by one organ on the purview of another.

My delegation believes that establishing a strong relationship and ongoing cooperation between the Security Council and the General Assembly is a matter of critical importance to the effectiveness of the United Nations in dealing with the challenges and threats confronting it. That relationship must be interactive in serving the interests of all Member States. To achieve that goal, cooperation between those two organs must be strengthened and further dialogue and exchanges of information must be pursued. Given the great importance of the matter and the fact that the General Assembly, as the main organ of the United Nations, is an integral part of the collective security system established by the Charter, the Security Council must respect the wishes of the Assembly in its decision-making process.

The reform of the Security Council must be comprehensive and reflect the new political realities of our times. The Council will not be able to maintain international peace and security, as mandated by the Charter, unless it reflects changes on the international scene and the new realities of the twenty-first century. It must also be democratic and transparent and must protect the interests of small States even before those of large ones. Its objectives must be in the interest of all if it is to be truly representative of all States, protect their rights and interests and ensure their stability.

Reform of the Security Council, the main organ of the United Nations entrusted with the maintenance of international peace and security, has now become an urgent priority due to awareness among all Member States of the need for the Council to equitably represent them all. Questions of increasing its membership and improving its working methods and procedures have become priority issues facing the United Nations. There is also a need to ensure that Council reform will serve the interests of all States. It must take into account the large increase in the membership of the Organization. Efforts must also be redoubled in order to ensure that the Council equitably represents all States and that it takes all their interests into account.

The new Security Council we aspire to must be one that represents all States, protects all their interests and ensures their security. It must ensure their stability. It must be a Council to which all turn for protection in times of crisis and need. It must be a Council that all Members trust, as well as one that guarantees peace and security, defends rights and establishes justice. It must be guided by equality. That is the Council we all desire for our Organization.

Mr. Hamidon (Malaysia): At the outset, allow me to join you, Sir, and others who have spoken before me to express, in the strongest terms, our condemnation of the terrorist attacks that took place in Amman. On behalf of the Government and people of Malaysia, we extend our deepest condolences to the Government and people of Jordan for the loss of life and the destruction caused by those attacks.

My delegation is pleased to participate in this joint debate on agenda items 9 and 117. I wish to express my sincere appreciation to Ambassador Andrey Denisov of the Russian Federation, current President of the Security Council, for his presentation of the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly, as contained in document A/60/2. My delegation has taken note of the Council's report. I would also like to congratulate the newly elected members of the Council for the period 2006 to 2007, namely, Congo, Ghana, Peru, Qatar and Slovenia. We are confident they will bring fresh impetus to the work of the Council.

The General Assembly's consideration of the Security Council's annual report provides a good opportunity for the larger membership of the

Organization to assess the work and performance of the Council during the period under review. That is in keeping with Articles 15 and 24 of the Charter of the United Nations, where it is stipulated that the Assembly shall receive and consider annual and special reports from the Council and that those reports shall include an account of the measures that the Council has decided upon or taken to maintain international peace and security.

The report before us is a useful reference that summarizes the extensive work carried out by the Security Council over the period under review. We appreciate the vital contribution and pivotal role of the Council in the maintenance of world peace and security. The discussion on the Council's report provides an opportunity for Member States to reflect upon the importance of the Council's role and how its efficiency and effectiveness may be further enhanced. That should be seen in the context of promoting transparency in the work of the Council.

While my delegation commends the ongoing trend towards transparency in the Council's work, greater transparency and accountability could be promoted by convening an open meeting of the Council to discuss its report before it is submitted to the General Assembly.

My delegation notes that the Council addressed a wide range of issues during the period under review, reaffirming the trend in recent years towards a continuous increase in the volume and scope of the Council's activities. A total of 229 meetings were held, 61 resolutions were adopted and 58 presidential statements were made.

Conflicts and instability in Africa continue to be at the forefront of the Council's agenda. Despite the severity of the circumstances of the crisis in the Sudan, Malaysia is pleased that the situation has improved considerably following the successful conclusion of the Naivasha peace process. My delegation commends the Council for taking the initiative to adopt eight resolutions on the Sudan and to convene extraordinary meetings at Nairobi on 18 and 19 November 2004 — only the fourth time it has met outside United Nations Headquarters. The deployment of the United Nations Mission in the Sudan clearly demonstrates the commitment of the Security Council to peace and security in the country, opening a new chapter in the country's history. Malaysia looks forward to the Council taking more effective decisions on conflict situations, particularly in Africa.

The increasing practice of holding open meetings of the Council provides an important contribution, as such meetings provide opportunities for the general membership to participate in the Council's work. We especially welcome the Council's growing practice of deploying missions to the field, such as the one to Central Africa, from 21 to 25 November 2004, to assess the prospects for peace and stability in the region. Furthermore, we commend the briefings on the humanitarian situation in Africa by Mr. Jan Egeland, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, to bring to the Council's attention the challenges in trying to secure enough resources to help deal with acute humanitarian needs in Africa. We appeal to the international community to come forward and contribute generously to lessen the burden and suffering of people in need in Africa.

We also commend the public debate on the African dimension in the work of the Security Council at the wrap-up meeting held following the more than 20 formal and informal meetings on African issues that the Council held during the month of March this year. My delegation underscores the need to combine peace and security efforts with long-term development strategies, with a view to moving from the logic of resolution to one of prevention.

We welcome the joint efforts by the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council in that regard. That is all the more pertinent with the recognition of the interconnectedness of threats and challenges faced by the international community and the need to face them in an integrated fashion, taking into account the linkages between development, peace, security and human rights. We should also emphasize the importance of strengthening coordination between the United Nations system and regional organizations. In that regard, the growing interaction with the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States should be encouraged further.

Malaysia agrees that holding thematic debates is useful in improving the effectiveness of the Council. We consider thematic open debates as avenues to allow Council members and the wider membership of the United Nations to offer views and suggestions on issues directly related to the Council's work. However,

it is still unclear whether the Council has actually fully considered those views when arriving at decisions.

Given the Council's increasing workload, we believe that thematic discussions should be kept to a minimum, and held specifically with a view to achieving concrete results that have an impact on the performance not only of the Council but also the United Nations at large. We continue to believe that thematic debates and other important issues addressed by the Council from time to time merit the submission of special reports to the General Assembly, as provided for under Articles 15 and 24 of the Charter and in keeping with the intent of Assembly resolution 58/126.

Malaysia has actively participated in thematic debates and has been a long-standing proponent of the Council's addressing the protection of civilians affected by armed conflict.

Recognizing the importance of gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping operations, we are particularly pleased with the Council's ongoing attention to the subject of women and peace and security. The same is true for the issue of children and armed conflict, as well as for the need for systematic and comprehensive monitoring and reporting mechanisms.

In the open debate on the role of the Security Council in humanitarian crises, my delegation expressed its view that any action aimed at humanitarian intervention per se has no basis in the Charter or in international law. It should therefore be clear that, while the Security Council has a role to play, its response should be based on a distinction between crises arising out of conflict situations and those resulting from other causes, including natural disasters.

While action to deal with conflict is laudable, it also remains the Council's responsibility to ensure that conflict is avoided. Hence there is definitely a need to learn from past experience and to continue to find ways and means to avert conflict. The efforts made to hold a discussion on this matter are steps in the right direction.

We recognize that the Council has the responsibility to address humanitarian issues that specifically relate to situations of conflict and that it has taken appropriate action to deal with such situations. The Council's consideration of such issues has laid the groundwork for action in the areas of peacekeeping and peacebuilding and in preventing a return to conflict. We agree that return to conflict often hinges on whether three key issues in post-conflict situations are adequately addressed, and to what extent — namely the promotion of the rule of law; security sector reform; and the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants. My delegation is supportive of the view that those pillars of post-conflict security should be further strengthened in order to achieve long-lasting peace.

Malaysia applauds the Council's continued interest in the Palestinian question as evidenced by the monthly briefings and open debates on that matter. However, we are disappointed that the Council failed to adopt a draft resolution on that issue on 5 October 2004 due to the negative vote of a permanent member of the Council. Of the 77 vetoes used by that permanent member of the Security Council, 26 have been cast in an attempt to cripple any tangible international effort in the ongoing Middle East conflict. My delegation would recall that only one resolution was adopted in that respect by the Council, namely resolution 1544 (2004) of 19 May 2004, which pertains to the demolition of Palestinian homes in the Rafah refugee camp by Israel, the occupying Power.

We call on the Security Council to enhance and maintain its credibility by asserting its authority concerning the Palestinian question, in particular in respect of commitment to the road map and to the two-State solution, the end of the occupation of Palestinian and Arab territories, the termination of Israel's settler colonialism activities, and the reversal of the construction of the separation wall.

The Council must not allow its resolutions to be manipulated or permit itself to be prevented from taking constructive action. The Council must resolutely take action concerning the construction of the Israeli expansionist separation wall, which has been declared illegal in the Advisory Opinion issued by the International Court of Justice.

The suffering of the Palestinian people under the occupation of Israel has been going on for far too long. Malaysia hopes that the Council will live up to its commitment to continue to support a comprehensive and just settlement in the Middle East based on resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 1397 (2002) and 1515 (2003), the foundations of the Madrid Conference, and the principle of land for peace.

Turning to agenda item 117, my delegation wishes to state that we agree with the prevailing view that the United Nations, including the Security Council, must be reformed in a comprehensive manner in terms of both its working methods and the expansion of its membership, to make it more legitimate, representative, democratic and transparent. We note the extensive discussions we have had on this issue over the years; however, it is time for us to move on to action.

In that regard, we note with interest the non-paper that has been circulated by a group of countries on improving the working methods of the Security Council. Some of the proposals in the paper are not new, but the fact that over the years they have resurfaced regularly in various non-papers shows that they contain elements that Member States view as crucial to Security Council reform.

Malaysia has been supportive with respect to the question of enlargement of the Security Council. Malaysia supports the expansion of both categories of membership, based on equitable geographical distribution so as to make it more broadly representative, reflecting the geopolitics of today. Malaysia wishes once again to reiterate its view position that, if there is no agreement on the expansion in the permanent membership, we should proceed with expansion of the non-permanent membership, while keeping the issue of the expansion of the permanent membership on the active agenda of the United Nations.

The reform should also address the question of the veto with a view to eventually doing away with it, in conformity with the principle of sovereign equality as envisaged in the Charter. Malaysia continues to believe that the exercise of the veto by the permanent members of the Security Council should be regulated so as to prohibit that power from being used unjustly, at the sole discretion of the holder, to override the wish of the majority.

On 28 April 2005, during the thematic discussion on the Secretary-General's report entitled "In larger freedom", Malaysia proposed that, until the objective of abolishing the veto is achieved, there could be a modified veto, whereby two veto powers would need the backing of three other members of the Security Council in order to block the adoption of a Security Council resolution.

The Security Council, before taking any decision on issues that requires implementation by Member States, should seek the views of the general membership. That would allow Member States to voice their opinions and to make comments or suggestions on potential improvements before a decision is taken. As we have seen in the past, some Security Council decisions have imposed on Member States a heavy burden in terms of providing reports, leading to reporting fatigue.

Mr. President, Malaysia will continue to support and work closely with you, other Members of the United Nations and the Secretary-General to explore new ideas and arrive at a fresh outlook with respect to Security Council reform. We already possess the necessary tools to advance that process. What is required is the full support and political will of Member States.

Mr. Wali (Nigeria): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the African Group on the agenda item entitled "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters".

Mr. President, we wish to express to you our appreciation for your leadership in the conduct of the work of this session as well as for your commitment to steering our deliberations towards the actualization of the decisions of world leaders as reflected in the outcome document.

Permit me also to express the sympathy of the African States Members of the United Nations to the Government and the people of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in connection with the terrorist attack of Wednesday, 9 November 2005, which claimed many lives.

Africa considers the reform of the Security Council as fundamental not solely to the entire reform process of the United Nations, to which we are committed, but also to the realization of the primary objective of the maintenance of international peace and security, in consonance with the provisions of the United Nations Charter. It is in that context that African leaders at the highest level of Government adopted, at their Summit in Sirte, Libya, on 5 July 2005, the Sirte Declaration on the Reform of the United Nations, which unambiguously states Africa's position on the matter.

I wish to recall that Africa's contributions to the various processes that led to the September 2005 world summit were informed by that position. Africa's call for a comprehensive reform of the Security Council aimed at making it more broadly representative and transparent is based on our assessment that such a reform would enhance the legitimacy of its decisions and the representativity of its membership.

For us, such reform should not be limited to expanding the Council in the permanent and non-permanent categories; it should also include improving the Council's working methods to make it more effective and efficient, strengthening the transparency of its procedures, improving its functioning and its decision-making process and ensuring greater involvement in its work. We therefore consider the present session of the General Assembly an historic opportunity to take decisions that will ensure that reform of the Security Council leads to its democratization, transparency and accountability. Reform should also enable us to comprehensively redress the injustice against developing countries, especially those in Africa.

Africa can therefore neither associate itself with nor support any initiative, however conceived, that seeks a partial approach to Security Council reform. Such an approach, in our assessment, would run counter to the decisions of our leaders and to the wishes of the broad majority of the United Nations membership.

I wish to reiterate once again Africa's call for Security Council reform through equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Council. Lest there be any doubt, Africa's representation means no fewer than two permanent seats, with all the prerogatives and privileges attached thereto, as well as five non-permanent seats. Indeed, Africa has a clear position and a clear understanding regarding what permanent seats would mean and entail for the continent. I therefore have the honour to inform the Assembly that that position was reaffirmed in the latest decision reached by African leaders at their Extraordinary Summit in Addis Ababa on 31 October 2005.

Africa is determined to engage with other United Nations Member States outside our region in pursuit of that clear position of the African Union. In that process, I wish to assure you, Mr. President, of our cooperation, mindful of the desire and commitment of other States to implement the decisions of world leaders.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): We welcome the opportunity to discuss two reports — the report of the Security Council concerning its work during the period 1 August 2004 to 31 July 2005 (*A/60/2*) and the report of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council (*A/59/47*). In that regard, we align ourselves with the statement made by the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the African Group. We particularly want to highlight the part of that statement expressing Africa's condolences to our colleagues from Jordan and to the Jordanian people with regard to the tragic incident that occurred yesterday in their country.

The Security Council has a solemn mandate to maintain international peace and security, which means that it has far-reaching impact on the lives of many people throughout the world. That gives urgency to the efforts to expand and transform the Council into a more credible, representative and effective organ.

We note the ongoing attempts to improve the working methods of the Security Council. However, we would be more appreciative if those reforms were made permanent so that the Council could have predictable working methods. We are pleased to note that the Council is gradually opening up to regional players in its maintenance of international peace and security, as demonstrated by the Council meeting in Kenya and the subsequent presidential statement reaffirming the institutional relationship with the African Union, as well as by resolution 1631 (2005), on cooperation with regional organizations. We hope that that relationship is further strengthened as we continue towards the peaceful resolution of conflicts on our African continent.

We are deeply concerned that the conflict in the Middle East continues unabated. In our view, the Security Council missed a significant opportunity to revive the Middle East peace process, which presented itself during the past year following the reduction in the levels of violence and terrorism and the disengagement of the Israeli army from Gaza. We believe that the Council could have seized that opportunity and acted decisively, rather than passively

receiving routine monthly updates from the Secretariat. At the same time, the Council failed to react as Israel accelerated the construction of illegal settlements on the West Bank and continued the construction of the separation wall that has altered the demographic character of the occupied areas.

We welcome Syria's compliance with the call to withdraw its forces from Lebanon and its commitment to cooperate with the investigation into the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri. We wish to encourage the Security Council to make a similar call on Israel to withdraw its presence from the occupied Shaba'a Farms and the Syrian Golan and also to look into the assassinations of numerous Palestinian leaders in that area.

We welcome the decision to hold joint public briefings by the Chairs of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), the Al-Qaida/Taliban Sanctions Committee, and the Working Group established pursuant to resolution 1566 (2004) as a first step towards rationalizing and consolidating the Council's counter-terrorism programme. However, it is important that the rest of the membership participate in such debates before the adoption of important resolutions that have an impact on everyone.

We trust that Member States already struggling to catch up with the Security Council's demands will be provided a genuine opportunity to express their views on issues such as the future of the 1540 Committee and the review of the performance of the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate. The Council should take stock of the effectiveness of its efforts to provide technical assistance to those who require it and should address questions related to the transparency and cost-effectiveness of its work.

Another area in which improvements could be made concerns cooperation between the Security Council and troop-contributing countries. Recent meetings between the Council and troop-contributing countries have been rather unproductive, adding to the sense of frustration among those countries, which often feel that the Council does not take their operational difficulties into account when taking decisions that affect troop deployments.

In 1993, the General Assembly, through its resolution 48/26, established the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council. The Working Group was established because Member States recognized the need to address representational equity in the Security Council and to examine formulas to increase its membership. It is now more than 12 years since Member States began the debate on Council reform, and there is still no agreement because the Working Group has remained deadlocked, particularly on the vital issue of Security Council expansion.

At their September summit, heads of State and Government took a decisive decision by calling for reform of the Security Council as an essential element of the overall efforts to reform the United Nations. We believe that that decision has overtaken the deadlocked negotiations of the Open-ended Working Group and that it has committed Member States to reaching an early decision on this matter. As members are aware, the General Assembly is required to review progress on Security Council reform by the end of this year.

It is for that reason that we are pleased by the decision of the African Union to reintroduce its resolution calling for expansion of the Security Council in both categories. Last week, the extraordinary summit of the African Union reaffirmed Africa's desire for two permanent seats and five non-permanent seats on an expanded Security Council, with the new members exercising all the rights and privileges of current members.

The President has requested us to give him an indication as to how to move the process forward. South Africa believes that the broad objective of the reform should be to create a Security Council that is truly representative of the membership and able to respond effectively to international crises, as mandated by the Charter of the United Nations. The reformed Council should represent our collective security concerns in an even manner, and should be accountable to the entire membership of the United Nations. In our view, Council reform has to equally address both the enlargement of the Council and the improvement of its working methods. Anything less would be papering over cracks. It is for that reason that my delegation will have great difficulty in supporting any approach that addresses only one element of the reform of the Security Council.

We as Member States have the responsibility to ensure that the Security Council remains the universal repository of our efforts in the maintenance of peace and security by taking the bold step to reform it. The time has come to arrest the erosion of the Council's credibility and to seek agreement on the composition and working methods of a reformed Council. Let us create a Security Council that will serve us all in the context of the new geopolitical realities.

Mr. Abdelaziz (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me to begin by expressing our sympathy and solidarity with the Government and people of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan over the heinous terrorist attacks that occurred in Amman yesterday. They underscore the urgent need for a decisive role for the General Assembly in drafting and implementing a clear and concrete plan to combat international terrorism.

We associate ourselves with the statement made by the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the African Group. It emphasized the importance all of us should attach to the issue of the reform and enlargement of the Security Council as a fundamental and vital part of efforts to reform the United Nations — a concern that was also expressed by heads of State and Government in the outcome document of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly last September (*resolution 60/1*). Given the particular importance that Egypt attaches to that issue, we look forward to continuing our collective work in the context of transparency and constructive understanding to take practical and tangible steps towards enlarging the Security Council and reforming its methods of work.

I should now like to refer to several points that reflect Egypt's views about this vital issue as we move ahead.

First, last year produced several important developments pertaining to the two aspects of the Security Council reform as a result of the momentum that accompanied the report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, issued in the run-up to the High-level Plenary Meeting. Those developments have illustrated increasing African and international conviction that any effort to reform the Organization should include reform of the Security Council, including enlarging its membership and reforming its methods of work.

Secondly, the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council has made some progress in its efforts to develop clear proposals that command wide consensus with regard to reforming the Council's methods of work. We note with great concern, however, that due to a lack of political will to make the necessary breakthroughs in connection with either of the two aspects of reform, the Working Group could not translate that progress into practical conclusions to enable real reform with regard to enlarging the Security Council and improving its methods of work. We nevertheless believe that it is important that the Working Group continue its work on reforming the Security Council in both those areas and on negotiating an open and transparent mechanism through which the entire membership can express its views on the issue of reform. In requesting the General Assembly to review the progress made with regard to Council reform, the High-level Plenary Meeting emphasized the role of the Open-ended Working Group in reconciling varying points of view on the matter.

Thirdly, the intensive consultations carried out last year by the General Assembly have underscored the Assembly's determination that any model used to enlarge the membership of the Security Council should serve to bolster the participation of developing countries and reflect contemporary political realities, in particular the historical injustice Africa has suffered as a result of never having been a permanent member of the Council or enjoyed the right to the veto. Enlargement of the Council should also provide for reasonable representation of all civilizations and cultures. Despite the many proposals and models that have been put forth, none of which has enjoyed wide consensus, we should not give up our African and international aspirations, especially with regard to giving Africa permanent membership on the Council and equity and equality vis-à-vis the current permanent members. That must also include granting Africa non-permanent seats in accordance with the number of States on the continent as a proportion of the Organization's total membership.

In that connection, the most recent extraordinary session of the African Union created an African mechanism to continue to promote and muster support for Africa's position as emphasized in the Sirte Declaration and the Ezulwini Consensus, which

constitute an indivisible whole and cannot be addressed selectively. Africa will seek to mobilize support for its legitimate requests on this matter. In that regard, Africa seeks the support of the entire membership of the Organization, especially that of the permanent members of the Security Council.

Fourthly, with regard to reforming the Security Council's methods of work, last week we received the initiative by five friendly countries that included important ideas that merit our consideration and study. The delegation of Egypt will constructively and substantively consider that initiative as part of the overall effort to reform the Council's methods of work and its transparency and to ensure wider participation of non-members in its work and decision-making processes and in its subsidiary bodies. Reform should also ensure the Council's accountability to the General Assembly, balance the relationships among the Council and other principal organs of the United Nations, in accordance with the provisions of the Charter, and rationalize the use of the right of veto prior to its ultimate abolition. In that regard, we look forward to continuing consultations on the issue of enlarging the Council in order to grant Africa no less than two permanent seats with all the prerogatives of permanent membership, including the right to the veto, as well as five non-permanent seats. As clearly stated by the representative of Nigeria today, that objective would guarantee our aspirations as a continent in accordance with the resolutions adopted at the last African Union summit.

The consideration of the annual report of the Security Council is closely related to what has been said about the reform of the Council. There is no doubt that we need to urgently develop the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly so as to go beyond the routine of an annual report which is merely a narrative of the Council's activities and offers no analytical assessment of the obstacles that impede the effective and full implementation of its resolutions or of the methods of tackling the issues before it.

In this context, it has become more urgent to have an increased and developed thematic and institutional interaction between the Council and the Assembly so that Council activities will not encroach upon issues beyond its responsibilities for maintaining peace and security to include subjects that fall under the proper competence of the General Assembly, such as human rights, disarmament and international cooperation to combat terrorism. This should be done in order to re-establish a more balanced relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly, on the one hand, and the Economic and Social Council on the other, and to carry out fundamental and genuine reform of those organs in a manner that makes their action more transparent, democratic and accountable. It would require that the General Assembly go beyond its rigid framework and not follow precedents that have caused it to lose more of its mandates and capabilities to the Security Council.

We look to you, Mr. President, to lead us in a new direction for the General Assembly. For example, condemnation, expressions of solidarity and observance of minutes of silence or prayer for victims are not sufficient means for dealing with terrorism. The Assembly should seek to realize clearer objectives that go beyond the adoption of the general protocol to the adoption of a comprehensive strategy and a clear working plan of action, so that it can achieve the security and stability to which we aspire.

In view of the amount of time occupied by issues of peace and security in Africa in the activities and plans of action of the Council, and in order to benefit from the genuine partnership with the African Union and other regional African organizations, there is a need to expand African representation in the Council's membership. Also, African participation in the Council's activities should be increased through new mechanisms that will lead to transparency in its working methods. In this respect, we call for the revival, activation and expansion of participation in the task force that exists within the Council to prevent and settle African disputes, taking advantage of the experience of the African Union in a manner that would achieve the hoped-for results.

Ms. Bethel (Bahamas): While the Bahamas aligns itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Barbados on behalf of the member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), we wish to offer a few additional comments from a national perspective.

In 1945 the nations of the world, fresh from the horrors of war, embarked upon one of the greatest undertakings in international diplomacy — the United Nations. At that time, 51 States decided that the best chance for sustained peace was to bind together their

common hopes and aspirations in this world Organization based on the principles of international law, international security, economic development and social equity. Today, 60 years later, the nearly universal membership of the United Nations, with 191 Member States, is a testament to its appeal and indispensability.

As the sentinel for international peace and security within the United Nations system, the Security Council has often taken centre stage as we all grapple with the challenges brought on by an increasingly complex international order and the attendant opportunities, obstacles, and threats.

In compliance with Article 24, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, we are today considering the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly contained in document A/60/2, which has been ably presented by Ambassador Denisov of the Russian Federation. The annual report has been the object of much comment over the years, given its potential to be a major point of interaction between these two principal bodies of the Organization. This potential takes on great significance because, according to Article 24, paragraph 1, of the Charter, the Member States of the United Nations "confer on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and agree that in carrying out its duties under this responsibility the Security Council acts on their behalf".

Inasmuch as the Council acts on behalf of all United Nations Member States in the maintenance of international peace and security, and while few would argue that the report before us is not comprehensive, many countries, the Bahamas included, agree that it could and should be more substantive and analytical, presenting a reflective view and assessment of the Council's activities. It is also in this vein that the Bahamas supports the idea of an interactive exchange between the Council and the General Assembly when this report is being considered by the latter.

The report certainly illustrates the width and breadth of the actions undertaken by the Council on our behalf and reveals a continuous increase in the volume and scope of its activities. The greater number of those activities were, in our view, rightfully geared towards bringing resolution to a number of conflict and post-conflict situations, particularly in Africa. We commend the Council for its focus in this area, especially in light of the acknowledged nexus between peace, security and development and the need to ensure that Africa makes significant strides towards the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

The Bahamas also welcomes the Council's sustained focus on our sister Caribbean nation, Haiti, through the activities of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), in an effort to resolve the complexity of challenges confronting that country. Thus we note with satisfaction the Council's acknowledgement of "the importance of promoting long-term economic development alongside security and political stability" within Haiti (*A/60/2, p. 11*). It is absolutely imperative that the international community continue to provide Haiti with the required assistance and support for its upcoming elections and beyond.

The Bahamas also takes a keen interest in the work of the Council's various counter-terrorism bodies, particularly their efforts to increase coordination in their respective fields of work, and the provision of technical assistance to States in need. The sometimes Herculean effort required to implement critical counter-terrorism measures adopted by the Security Council, as well as to meet reporting obligations under various resolutions, continues to pose a challenge to many States, particularly small States. The Bahamas would encourage the Council to continue its efforts to coordinate much-needed assistance to States in all aspects of their counter-terrorism obligations in our collective fight against this scourge.

Allow me at this juncture to convey the condolences of the people and Government of the Bahamas to the people and Government of Jordan on the loss of life and destruction caused by the terrorist bombings in Amman yesterday.

We acknowledge the service and efforts of the Member States that are members of the Security Council. We believe it is vital that all Member States with the capacity to serve on the Council be given an opportunity to do so, and therefore we feel that the expansion of the Council's membership is appropriate and should be given careful and due consideration. A Council that is truly representative of the present world must more equitably reflect the current membership of the Organization, allowing developing countries,

including small island developing States, to play a greater role in its activities.

Expanding the membership of the Security Council is, however, only one dimension of the reform that needs to take place in that body. The other equally important dimension is reform of the Council's working methods. The 2005 World Summit Outcome (*resolution 60/1*) acknowledges and speaks to this aspect directly, recommending that the Council continue to adapt its working methods so as to increase the involvement of States not members of the Council in its work, as appropriate, enhance its accountability to the membership and increase the transparency of its work.

In tandem with the report of the Security Council, we are also, appropriately, considering the report of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council, which is contained in document A/59/47. I had the distinct pleasure of co-chairing that Working Group, along with Ambassador Christian Wenaweser of Liechtenstein, during the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly. During that period, the Working Group's discussions concentrated on matters related to the working methods of the Security Council, or cluster-II issues, as they are commonly called.

As evidenced by this report of the Working Group, many Member States place great emphasis and importance on the working methods of the Security Council as a means of making the body more transparent, inclusive, accountable and effective. The Bahamas believes that positive contributions to the work of the Council could and would be made by many countries that would otherwise be kept on the periphery or totally excluded if the working methods of that body were modified. There is a plethora of recommendations and suggestions that have issued forth from the Open-ended Working Group in this regard, last year and in preceding years, and we invite the Security Council to consider them within a constructive and progressive frame of reference.

In this vein, the Bahamas is heartened by the discussions on working methods that have been generated in the wake of the draft resolution crafted by the "Small Five" delegations of Costa Rica, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Singapore and Switzerland. We commend those delegations for this initiative, and we hope it will lead to a groundswell of dialogue and action culminating in a positive outcome for all concerned. This could be a critical first step in acting on the agreement of the summit in September that early reform of the Security Council is an essential element of our overall effort to reform the United Nations.

We are all familiar with the saying that with great power comes great responsibility. Nowhere is this old adage more appropriate than when it comes to the Security Council. We believe that primary among the Council's responsibilities is that of engaging regularly and constructively in dialogue with those on whose behalf it acts, in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust. It is the sincere hope of my delegation that this debate and the ensuing relevant discussions will all contribute to that end.

Mr. Benmehidi (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): Algeria strongly condemns the hateful terrorist attacks that hit Amman yesterday. I wish to convey sincere condolences on behalf of the Government and the people of Algeria to the Government and the fraternal people of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. I would also like to convey sincere condolences to the grief-stricken families of the victims.

I would like to thank Ambassador Andrey Denisov, the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation and President of the Security Council for the month of November, for his comprehensive introduction of the annual report of the Security Council (*A/60/2*). The period covered by the report, from August 2004 to July 2005, occurred during Algeria's term as an elected member of the Council. Hence, my delegation would like to draw some lessons from our tenure, particularly relating to the Council's working methods and to the question of equitable representation on that organ.

As a non-aligned, African and Arab country, Algeria has used its term on the Security Council to further the demands put forward by those three crucial elements of the Organization and echoed by the overwhelming majority of Member States: democratization of the Security Council; transparency in its work; and improvement in its effectiveness pursuant to the prerogatives assigned by the Charter to each principal organ.

The report before us attests to an extremely heavy, dense agenda for the reporting period. We note

that in the main these efforts were focused mainly on conflicts in Africa as well as on the Middle East region. The large number of conflicts and pre-conflict situations has made it essential that the Council draw on all the resources offered by the Charter in the area of conflict prevention and settlement. Increasingly, the Council, given the multitude of its tasks, has had to look outside itself and solicit the support of regional organizations pursuant to Chapter VIII; that of the Secretary-General, in his mediating role through his network of special representatives and personal envoys; and that of Member States as influential regional actors or troop contributors. All of them have a contribution to make in working out a decision.

Within the Security Council, Algeria has actively sought to promote that just concept of shared responsibility of the members of the international community for the maintenance of international peace and security. While this is the primary responsibility of the Security Council under the Charter, it is not its exclusive province. Algeria will continue to work to strengthen this trend and will join in the efforts of all Member States to that end.

We can already say that there has been — admittedly limited — an improvement in the transparency of the Council's work through the increased number of public meetings and the improved dialogue with parties to conflicts and with troop-contributing countries.

However, this should not blind us to some deficiencies, relating to the still excessive use of Chapter VII in situations where the resources of Chapter VI would suffice to achieve the same goal; to a persistent lack of political will to act on Council decisions taken under that very Chapter VII in a fixed and non-discriminatory way, as continues to be the case when it comes to the Middle East; and, finally, to the dearth of resources available to the Security Council to provide appropriate responses in post-conflict and peacebuilding situations. Algeria earnestly hopes that the proposal to create a Peacebuilding Commission will objectively take account of the respective advantages of the principal organs before a rushed decision is taken to set up such a body.

In that light, I turn now to the question of equitable representation on the Security Council. My delegation associates itself fully with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Nigeria on behalf of the African Group.

The world summit held in September demonstrated once again the great interest that Member States attach to Security Council reform as an essential element of the overall reform of the United Nations. Strong arguments were made for the expansion of the Security Council and for improving its working methods in order to make it more representative and more effective, and thus, to bolster its legitimacy and authority.

We hope that the question of the reform of the United Nations in general and that of the Security Council in particular will see positive developments as soon as possible so as not to lose the momentum that has been generated. We hope that such developments will put an end to the historical injustice done to the developing countries, particularly to the developing countries of Africa.

My delegation would like here to reaffirm its commitment to the specific proposals on substantive issues made by countries of the Non-Aligned Movement, reflecting a determination to strengthen the representativity and effectiveness of the Security Council. Clearly, such Security Council reform is by nature comprehensive, as it applies both to the Council's working methods and to its expansion. Here, we take note of the laudable efforts of a number of delegations to submit a draft resolution on improving the working methods of the Security Council. Africa's approach to Security Council reform, as set out in last session's draft resolution A/59/L.67, reflects African aspirations as set forth in the Ezulwini Consensus and as reaffirmed in the Sirte Declaration and at the fifth Extraordinary Session of the African Union Assembly, held in Addis Ababa on 31 October 2005: we aspire to a Security Council that is better adapted to contemporary realities.

Africa requests two permanent seats, with the same privileges and prerogatives enjoyed by current permanent members, including the veto, and five non-permanent seats. In due course, the African Union will, in a spirit of solidarity and unity, take a decision on the modalities for the apportionment of the seats to which it is entitled, pursuant to the Sirte Declaration. At the same time, we reaffirm our willingness and our desire to work with all delegations to make progress on Security Council reform. Here, we stress the integral

nature of the Sirte Declaration, which allows of no departure from any of its constituent elements.

Mr. Al-Najem (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): I wish at the outset to express Kuwait's outrage at the terrorist bombings in three hotels in the Jordanian capital of Amman and to state our vigorous condemnation of those attacks. The bombings were intended to destabilize that country and took a heavy toll of innocent lives. Kuwait firmly rejects all such terrorist acts, which contravene all human values and norms. I convey our condolences and sympathy to the Government of Jordan and to the families of the victims. We wish the injured a speedy recovery.

I thank the President of the Security Council for the month of November, Ambassador Andrey Denisov, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation, for his lucid introduction of the report of the Council to the General Assembly (*A/60/2*). He noted that the steady increase in the volume and breadth of the Council's work has continued over the past year. I also express our great appreciation to the former Chairperson of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and to the two Vice-Chairpersons for their tireless efforts and for the excellent manner in which they guided the Group's deliberations.

It goes without saying that the item before us today is among the most important on the agenda of the General Assembly. That is clearly reflected in the intensity of this year's discussion of the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council, which has resulted in the submission of a number of draft resolutions by like-minded regional groups. The importance that Member States attach to the question of equitable representation on the Council and reform of the Council's working methods is reflected also in the support of heads of State or Government for speedy reform of the Council, as expressed in the outcome document of the recent High-level Plenary Meeting (resolution 60/1), with a view to making the Council more representative, efficient, transparent and effective, and to enhancing its legitimacy, as well as in their commitment to continue working towards an early decision on this matter.

In its deliberations of recent years, the Working Group has stressed the urgency of restructuring the Security Council and increasing the transparency of its working methods and procedures. Notwithstanding agreement among Member States on the principle of reform and change, the Working Group — 12 years after its establishment — has yet to agree on the nature of the changes to be effected. But we cannot disregard the progress made in the Group's deliberations, particularly with respect to the procedures and working methods of the Security Council. There is near-consensus on the proposals for changes that need to be made. Indeed, the Council itself has taken the initiative to introduce new procedures and working methods. We must hail these improvements in the Council's working methods. Our appreciation goes to the members of the Council, who regularly brief the broader membership on developments within the Security Council, thus helping to increase transparency.

Kuwait's position on this matter is based on the following principles. Kuwait strongly supports the reform and revitalization of the organs of the United Nations. This includes the Security Council, which will thus be enabled to discharge its Charter mandate of the maintenance of international peace and security. Secondly, no change in the composition of the Security Council must affect the efficiency and effectiveness with which the Council adopts resolutions in response to international threats and challenges. Change must help enhance the legitimacy and credibility of Council resolutions.

With respect to reforming and improving the working methods of the Council and the development of its relations with other United Nations organs, such as the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, we will support any proposal that will increase the transparency and clarity of the work of the Council and facilitate the flow of information to and from the United Nations membership at large.

We emphasize the need to institutionalize the steps the Council has taken to improve its working methods without awaiting agreement on other issues, such as the Council's size, composition and decision-making process. Institutionalizing those steps need not require amendment of the Charter.

Kuwait supports retention of the mechanism by which non-permanent members of the Security Council are elected, under Article 23, paragraph 2, of the Charter. It gives small countries, such as mine, a

greater opportunity to join the Security Council and to contribute to its work.

It is important that the use of the veto be limited and regulated, including by limiting it to action and issues under Chapter VII of the Charter.

In conclusion, it is our hope that we shall soon reach a consensus satisfactory to all parties and ensuring the smooth, unimpeded conduct of the work of the Security Council.

Mr. Bodini (San Marino): Let me begin by condemning the terrorist attacks that recently took place in Jordan. The people and the Government of San Marino present their deepest condolences to the Government and the people of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and to the families of the victims.

We, the States Members of the United Nations, have debated for many years the enlargement of the Security Council. This year the discussion has been equally disappointing for those who, like us, are proposing an increase in the membership without new permanent members and for those who are seeking new permanent members.

The Government and the people of San Marino believe that, in order to find an equitable solution, we must first address what lies at the root of the widespread discontent with the current system. It is important, for a start, to take notice of the ongoing dissatisfaction of the elected delegations to the Council, which feel like temporary witnesses with marginal influence on the decision-making process.

Furthermore, action by the Council in its present form has often resulted in the polarization of the international community along political lines. It might be wise, in order to reinforce the democratic nature of the Council, to reassess the use of the veto power. If we do so, a better and more representative system could begin to take shape within the Security Council.

Moreover, I wish to point out that, even if a system of 15 delegations is more easily manageable, what matters is not the number of members but the constituencies being represented. In fact, in the current system, small and medium-sized countries are not really represented in a consistent way. The common goal of achieving peace and security should be the guiding principle uniting countries seeking representation within the Council. Since demographic landscapes and political and economic interests are constantly changing, a larger non-permanent membership would make the Council truly representative of all the different realities of an evolving world.

It is also of paramount importance that we immediately initiate a serious debate on the working methods of the Council and on its transparency, which would encourage active participation by, and an exchange of ideas among, the elected members and those that voted for them.

On that subject, San Marino is sympathetic to the informal paper prepared by Costa Rica, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Singapore and Switzerland.

We believe that any decision on a final reform of the Council should be legitimized by consensus among Member States.

Finally, we encourage all Members to engage in an introspective analysis on this thorny issue and to take a definitive and bold decision, within a reasonable time-frame, so that a truly democratic evolution of the Security Council can take place that will benefit all of us. The whole world is waiting for a reform of the Council. We cannot fail.

Mr. Morote (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): Before I begin my statement, I should like, on behalf of the Government and the people of Peru, to express our heartfelt sympathy to the Government and the people of Jordan in connection with the human losses suffered due to the horrendous and appalling terrorist attack that took place in Amman.

I should like to thank the Ambassador of the Russian Federation, Andrey Denisov, for having introduced the report of the Security Council. Let me also express my delegation's appreciation for the work of the former President of the General Assembly, Mr. Jean Ping, as well as to the ambassadors of Liechtenstein and of the Bahamas for having coordinated the work of the Open-ended Working Group on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council.

Following a 10-year period of paralysis, the first half of this year witnessed an unprecedented impetus in the process of Security Council reform. Indeed, the Secretary-General, in his report entitled "In larger freedom", had proposed that a decision, by consensus or otherwise, be taken on the Council's membership

before the September summit. However, nothing happened. The Council was not reformed, and efforts in that direction led to naught.

Why has the Council remained unchanged? The answer is simple: because what is at stake is the way in which world power is distributed. If we look back at history, it is clear that the distribution of world power has shifted only following major geopolitical disasters, wars, the overextension of empires, or economic and technological decline.

It is a historical fact that the existence of Powers with a global reach and the capacity to create a new world order is not due to any majority decision on the part of States. International power is seldom shared; it is almost always won or lost.

That lack of pragmatism in the approach to, and methodology for, reform of the Security Council has probably been the main obstacle to the success of reform efforts. The plain truth is that the United Nations can function only on the basis of a realistic valuation of power. In addition, failure to adopt the appropriate political methodology would cause great harm to the United Nations, making it appear unable to reform itself and thus inviting criticism by its enemies.

Any reform of the Security Council must begin with a minimum degree of consensus among the current permanent members and be followed by a broad-based, democratic dialogue among all States. We must begin, at the very least, with a minimum formula that will not be vetoed. It is not realistic to believe that any new permanent Security Council members could be elected by the General Assembly in the absence of a basic agreement among current permanent members, because, whatever the outcome, such an agreement is a requirement under the Charter, which was adopted by us all.

Having noted the lack of pragmatism in the process of Security Council reform, I should like to make it clear that Peru favours such a reform. Although my delegation is critical of the unrealistic methodology used, we support expansion of the Security Council by means of a broad consensus. In that connection, we support Brazil, inter alia, as a potential permanent member.

I cannot fail to note, in commenting on the unrealistic approach taken to Security Council reform, that it is one of the reasons we lost a lot of time — time that should have been devoted to elaborating, in the context of the final document of the summit, an effective plan of action for achieving the Millennium Development Goals, particularly given the fact that the United Nations Development Programme's forthright 2005 *Human Development Report* stated that the Goals were not being met and requested that decisive action be taken. The outcome was disappointing. The final document of the summit, negotiated against the clock, did not include a plan of action to achieve the Millennium Goals.

Reform of the Security Council also implies enhancing its effectiveness and transparency and improving its working methods. What is important is that consultations be held with non-permanent members prior to the adoption of decisions by the Council and that such decisions not simply be presented, as is often the case, as a fait accompli. We must also give non-member States an opportunity to participate by enhancing consultation mechanisms when issues are discussed that are of direct interest to them.

Working documents of the Council must be more accessible, as many elements contained therein affect all States Members of the United Nations. All delegations must have the right to access working documents and draft resolutions as soon as the latter have been considered by the Council.

The best means of enhancing the transparency of the Council's work is to minimize the number of closed meetings while increasing the number of open meetings, like those held in the early days of the Security Council. The Council must be more public, not only to gain the confidence of non-member countries, but also to gain the confidence of world public opinion. The world must know that there is a body that protects peace and security.

Today, the Council, with its secrecy, is going in the opposite direction from the dizzying developments in telecommunications and from the rising global awareness that all nations belong to a single humanity. The Council must abandon secret diplomacy and become an organ that practises public diplomacy. Only thus will the Security Council and the United Nations make themselves understood and gain prestige in global public opinion.

Another way to improve the functioning of the Security Council is to make it effective in addressing crimes against humanity. Nothing discredits the

Security Council and the United Nations more than inertia in the face of ethnic cleansing, massive human rights violations and genocide. To improve the Council's functioning with regard to crimes against humanity, the five permanent Council members should reach a gentlemen's agreement not to use the veto when the United Nations Secretary-General or regional organizations request Council action to prevent or avoid crimes against humanity, massive human rights violations, genocide or ethnic cleansing. The idea is that permanent Council members should cooperate to save thousands of human lives.

Another valuable improvement in the working methods would be to step up field visits, particularly in order to understand civil conflicts. Such visits should be improved through effective and ongoing contacts with civil society, political and religious groups and staff of the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank and regional organizations familiar with the socio-political situation of the country visited. Moreover, field visits should be carried out not only when a conflict has already erupted, but when there is a threat of civil war or massive human rights violations jeopardizing international peace and security — that is, they should also be preventive.

The Council must not only continue to put out fires when it comes to civil conflicts; it must also analyse in depth the structural causes of such conflicts. Today, all strategic analyses agree that social exclusion exacerbates cultural, ethnic and religious rivalries, turning them into wars of national plundering in which the most heinous crimes against humanity are committed. Therefore field visits must be adequately prepared, particularly to obtain information about the degree of social exclusion in a country prone to or immersed in civil war. If the Council does not take into account the degree of social exclusion, it will not be able to prevent or resolve civil conflicts, because it would be disregarding the most important structural variable of current global violence.

Concerning the Council's working methods, my delegation welcomes the initiative of Switzerland and a group of countries to improve them.

Peru appreciates the efforts to improve the reports of the Security Council. However, the report continues to be descriptive; it is not sufficiently analytical and forward-looking. It does not evaluate current difficulties, progress, failures and trends encountered in the resolution of conflicts that threaten international peace and security.

If the report of the Security Council is not analytical and forward-looking, no one will be able to know whether the conflicts have diminished or increased; whether the stability of Africa, the Balkans, the Caucasus, Central Asia or Latin America has improved or is still precarious; how much stability there is in the Middle East and Iraq; what is happening in Kosovo; or why the situation in Darfur is not being resolved.

If the present report of the Security Council were read today by journalists, students of international relations or the general public, none of them would obtain clear and analytical information about the status of the conflicts threatening peace and security throughout the world. It is therefore necessary to prepare a report of the Security Council that has the merit of being understood by international public opinion so that it can be disseminated by the global media and can be discussed in international academic circles. The Human Development Report and the World Development Report of the World Bank are known *urbi et orbi*, but today I can say, without exaggerating, that no one is familiar with reports of the Security Council except us.

We need a report that connects the Security Council not only to the General Assembly but to all of humanity. Thus, not only the Council's efforts on behalf of peace, but also its limitations, would be widely known. That would provide realism and serve to eliminate the misperceptions that exist about the work of the United Nations.

All of these points — which the Peruvian delegation has made in order to improve the reform of the Council, the effectiveness of its work and the nature of its reports — reflect Peru's deep commitment to international peace and security. We hope that, as a non-permanent member of the Security Council during the period 2006-2007, we can make a contribution in that regard.

Programme of work

The President: I should like to inform members that, as its second item on Monday morning, 14 November, the Assembly will resume its consideration of agenda item 42, entitled "Global Agenda for Dialogue among Civilizations", to consider draft resolution A/60/L.17.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

United Nations A/60/PV.48

General Assembly
Sixtieth session

Official Records

48th plenary meeting
Thursday, 10 November 2005, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Eliasson ..... (Sweden)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Diarra (Mali), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda items 9 and 117 (*continued*)

Report of the Security Council (A/60/2)

Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters

Mr. Le Luong Minh (Viet Nam): It is my great honour to participate on behalf of the Vietnamese delegation in the joint debate today on two important agenda items relating to the report of the Security Council and the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Council and other related matters.

The past year has been another year of hard work for the Council, as reflected in the great number of meetings and the wide range of complex and urgent issues it has had to tackle. We commend the members of the Council for their efforts.

As described in the Security Council's report to the General Assembly, about 50 per cent of the Council's work this year was dedicated to Africa, which continues to draw the special attention of the Council and of the international community as a whole. In this regard, we share the common view of Member States that the Council should continue to give African issues careful and particular attention, in order to make solid contributions to resolving African conflicts.

Terrorism is also a matter of top priority for the Council. The surge of terrorist attacks during the past year — the latest one taking place just last night in Jordan, resulting in more than 60 deaths and nearly 200 injuries — has proved that terrorism continues to be one of the most dangerous threats to international peace and security. We would like to convey to the Government and people of Jordan and the families of the victims our most profound sympathy.

We note with satisfaction the Council's continuous efforts to address this threat, and we welcome the strengthened cooperation among the Council's relevant subsidiary organs, including the Counter-Terrorism Committee, the 1267 Committee and the 1540 Committee. Viet Nam strongly condemns all acts of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and we look forward to strengthening our cooperation with the Council in this connection.

With regard to the report's format, we appreciate efforts made with a view to providing a concise guide to the activities of the Council. Nevertheless, we share the view held by many Member States that the report is still far from substantive in content and lacks an assessment of the Council's work.

Turning to the issue of Security Council reform, my delegation acknowledges that there have been some positive changes in the working methods of the

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Council, such as the increased use of public meetings, consultations with regional organizations and strengthened coordination among the Council's subsidiary bodies. We hope this momentum will continue, with a view to ensuring the genuine democracy, transparency and accountability of its work, thus turning the Council into a body able to effectively perform its functions of maintaining international peace and security.

In this regard, we take note of the report of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council, contained in document A/59/47. While acknowledging certain progress, the report did point out that there were still varying views with regard to the six issues concerning the working methods of the Council and the transparency of its work that the Open-ended Working Group dealt with during the past year.

We also take note of the proposals on the working methods of the Council put forward just recently by the delegations of Costa Rica, Liechtenstein, Jordan, Singapore and Switzerland. These proposals deserve our careful examination. Though they are new, a quick review enables us to say that we can support many of them. Moreover, the interest of Member States in moving the process forward should be welcomed.

We share the view that the enlargement and working methods of the Council can be better served if they are dealt with in parallel and complementary processes. Over the past year, Member States have discussed intensively and substantially possibilities for the expansion of the Council. For our part, we wish to reiterate our position that the Council needs to be enlarged in both membership categories to ensure that it truly represents all United Nations Members, as stipulated in the Charter. We believe that developing States should be more adequately represented in this important organ of the Organization. We acknowledge that different views remain in this connection. We look forward to working with other delegations to arrive at a solution that enjoys the support of a broad majority of Member States.

Viet Nam attaches great importance to the work of the Security Council and has proposed its candidature for a non-permanent seat on the Council for the term 2008-2009. Not forgetting that reform of the Council is part of the United Nations reform process as a whole — in which revitalization of the work of the General Assembly and reform of other bodies of the United Nations, especially the Economic and Social Council, are of equal importance — we consider success in reforming the Council critical not only for the effectiveness of its work in maintaining international peace and security, but also for the success of the United Nations reform process as well. This approach will continue to guide our actions.

Mr. Wang Guangya (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): First of all, I wish on behalf of the Chinese Government and people to express our condolences to the victims of the terrorist attack in Jordan. We also strongly condemn this attack.

The Charter of the United Nations entrusts the Security Council with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of world peace and security. Since the beginning of this year, the Security Council, in its continuous commitment to respond to conventional and non-conventional security issues, has made great efforts in such areas as conflict prevention, dispute settlement, peace restoration, counter-terrorism and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. An effective, accountable and representative Security Council is in the common interests of all United Nations Member States. Adhering to multilateralism, strengthening the role of the United Nations and safeguarding the authority of the Security Council can help countries cope effectively with increasingly complex global threats and challenges.

At September's world summit, Chinese President Hu Jintao made a comprehensive enunciation of China's position on Security Council reform. I wish to reiterate here China's support for necessary and rational reform of the Council, including its expansion and improvement of its working methods, in order to maintain its authority, increase its efficiency and strengthen its role.

Democratization of international relations is a global trend, which should also be reflected in the Security Council. While developing countries account for more than two thirds of the entire United Nations membership, they are seriously underrepresented in the Security Council. China holds that expansion of the Council should give priority to augmenting the representation of developing countries in general and African countries in particular, and should increase the

opportunities for more countries, particularly small and medium-sized countries, to participate in the Council's decision-making process.

In expanding the Council, it is imperative to adhere to the principle of equitable geographical distribution and ensure the representation of different cultures and civilizations.

Necessary and appropriate improvement should be made to the Council's working methods so that the creative ideas and constructive proposals from non-Council members and regional organizations, as well as from civil society, can be fully reflected. In recent years, quite a number of countries have come up with many positive suggestions and options in this respect, and the Council has made headway in its actual work. China is ready to continue to work with other members of the Council to this end.

Security Council reform is an issue of great sensitivity and complexity, as it bears on the national interests of all Member States. Over the past few months, China has been vigorously advocating and urging Council reform in an appropriate and healthy direction. We stand by the following principles.

First, Council reform should be based on democratic discussion, with a view to reaching the broadest possible consensus. No artificial deadline should be set, nor should a vote be imposed. Only when this approach is followed can the relevant decisions command the widest possible trust and support and meet the common long-term interests of all Member States. A reform package that addresses the concerns of only a few States while disregarding those of the majority, and that treats African and other developing countries inequitably, will lead nowhere.

Secondly, reform should reflect the spirit of mutual compromise and maintain our solidarity. As a big family with 191 members, the United Nations derives its strength from unity. To date, Member States have yet to find a Council expansion formula that can meet the concerns of all parties and enjoy universal support. Naturally, all parties should, therefore, continue the dialogue and engage in full consultations in search of compromise. As long as all concerned take to heart the unity and long-term interests of the United Nations, accommodate each other's interests and concerns and display a pragmatic and flexible approach, a universally acceptable solution to reform will eventually be found.

Thirdly, the reform should be a gradual process in which the interests of overall United Nations reform should be kept in mind. Security Council reform is part and parcel of United Nations reform as a whole — reforms in other areas being of equal importance. Discussion over the Council's expansion in the run-up to the September summit consumed a great deal of the energy and time of all Member States. Consequently, consultations on comprehensive United Nations reform and on the outcome document were severely hampered. We must draw lessons from this and prevent its recurrence in the follow-up to the Summit Outcome (*resolution 60/1*) and in promoting United Nations reform.

This year marks the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. At the September summit, world leaders made solemn pledges and took important decisions on United Nations reform. The current General Assembly session should advance the reform process and strengthen the role of the United Nations. China is ready to actively support and cooperate with the work of the President of the General Assembly and contribute to the implementation of the summit outcome document.

Mr. Bolton (United States of America): I welcome the opportunity to participate in the discussion on reform and expansion of the Security Council. I hope our review of the issue today, as called for in paragraph 153 of the outcome document (*resolution 60/1*), contributes to an agreement on an approach that builds broad support among Member States.

The United States strongly believes in the Security Council. We will continue to ensure that the Council is able to carry out its mandate under the Charter. In discussing the Council's structure and methods, our foremost priority remains ensuring its effectiveness.

I would like to express my appreciation to President Eliasson for his outstanding leadership of this historic effort to implement the key reforms endorsed in the outcome document. I thank my friend and colleague from the Russian Federation, the current President of the Council, for his comments on the work of the Security Council over the past year. Ambassador Denisov's report highlights the need for a Council able to meet the challenges of a world in which conflict within borders, across borders and — too often —

without borders threatens the peace, security and freedom of people everywhere.

In recent weeks, the Council has acted on a number of critical issues affecting international peace and security, including Syria, Iraq and the Horn of Africa. I believe there is much for the Council to do to bring an end to long-running conflicts. As we have advocated in the Council, the collective efforts of this Organization need to focus on resolving the underlying disputes that fuel these conflicts, working closely with Member States, regional organizations, the private sector and other international bodies.

I mention a few of the vital issues before the Security Council today to emphasize a point. Discussions of reform and expansion of the Council must emphasize the need to strengthen — not weaken — the Council's ability to act.

The Security Council has under way a comprehensive review of its working methods and procedures and continues to take important steps to improve its efficiency. We believe that, as clearly stated in the Charter, the Security Council alone will determine its own working methods and procedures.

To that end, however, we fully welcome ideas and contributions from other Member States. The United States will continue to be a full participant in the Open-ended Working Group. Based on the work of this Group, the Council has already developed a series of procedures and practices to provide increased access and information on items being considered by the Council, including through briefings, *Journal* notices and the use of new information technology.

The Council will continue to engage with other Member States on issues such as conflict prevention and resolution, including through use of Arria-style meetings, contacts during Council missions and other activities.

The Council's sanctions committees will also continue their engagement with other Member States, including neighbouring countries, to inform the Council's work and support the full implementation of Council resolutions.

Just as the United States supports reform here in the General Assembly, we will lead by example by continuing reform in the Council, consistent with the powers and principles laid out in the United Nations Charter.

The United States supports an expansion of the Security Council that can contribute to its strength and effectiveness, and is open to various options to realize such a reform. Earlier this year, the United States made a specific proposal for a modest expansion of the Council by adding a combination of permanent and non-permanent members. We stand by that proposal and are open to suggestions of other countries.

As Secretary Rice has said, "We want that important body to reflect the world as it is in 2005, not as it was in 1945" (A/60/PV.9, p. 9). We must also ensure that new permanent members are supremely qualified to undertake the tremendous duties and responsibilities they will assume. In our view, qualified nations should meet criteria in the following areas: size of economy and population, military capacity, contributions to peacekeeping operations, commitment to democracy and human rights, financial contributions to the United Nations, non-proliferation and counter-terrorism records, and equitable geographic balance.

We have long supported a permanent seat for Japan. We hope very much that Japan will be able to take a permanent seat at the earliest possible opportunity. And we believe that developing countries deserve greater representation on this body. As I have already noted, particular emphasis should be placed on criteria for membership. And those Member States that most clearly meet those criteria should be allowed to serve on the Council, even where there is a disagreement over other candidates.

The United States is prepared to engage fully in an effort to find a proposal that allows for agreement on expansion of the Council. However, too large an expansion would risk making it unable to quickly address challenges to international peace and security. However, we will not support a return to any of the three proposals introduced at the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly. Simply put, in those past attempts we bit off more than we could chew. The debate in the Hall in July only highlighted deep divisions among Member States and paralysed the overall reform effort. We believe it would be a mistake to return to that discussion.

Because Security Council expansion requires amendment of the Charter — which requires approval by two thirds of the membership and by the five current permanent members, in accordance with their own respective constitutional procedures — we need to

prepare the way carefully to ensure that whatever approach we adopt can and will gain the requisite support of Member States during the ratification process. It is important that any proposal contribute to the effectiveness of the Security Council. Proposals that do not command the breadth of support necessary to be put into practice should be reconsidered.

The United States takes its responsibilities as a permanent member of the Security Council very seriously. History has shown that the Council, working together and with the full cooperation of all Member States, can reverse aggression, contribute to the expansion of freedom and maintain peace and security for the benefit of us all.

Mr. Menon (Singapore): It is a pity that the process to reform the Security Council has stalled. On the Council's expansion, except on the question of the veto, Singapore supports the lapsed draft resolution of the G-4. The G-4 proposal to expand the number of both permanent and non-permanent seats, which should include developed and developing countries, was a missed opportunity, as that would have updated the Council's membership and made it more representative of current-day realities. However, the regrettable inability to make progress in the area of expansion should not inhibit progress in other areas of United Nations reform.

The rationale of the right of the veto was born of a different era. It was a privilege and a safety valve conferred on the five victorious Powers in the Second World War to secure their participation in the United Nations, and hence ensure its success and viability. Sixty years on, Singapore opposes granting the veto to any new permanent members. Extending the veto to more countries would be a mistake, because it will complicate decision-making in the Council and undermine the credibility, efficiency and effectiveness of the United Nations. That would encourage the major Powers to bypass it and would undermine the Council, to the detriment of all.

It is unrealistic to expect the five permanent members to give up their right to the veto. At the same time, they are clearly conscious of that fact. They should be commended for sharply reducing their use of the veto in recent years. We should focus on feasible steps to improve the Security Council's transparency, accountability, efficiency and effectiveness. It is in all countries' interests, including the interests of the permanent members, that the Council's efficiency and effectiveness be enhanced. To that end, the open debates on the Council's work — for instance, on terrorism — Council meetings with troop-contributing countries and innovations such as Arria-formula meetings are useful and welcome. However, a lot more can be done. Greater transparency and accountability in the Council's working methods would accord Council decisions greater moral and political authority beyond what is legally conferred by virtue of the Charter of the United Nations.

With regard to transparency and accountability, this is usually the time of year when many corporations and organizations begin to do their stock-taking, not only of the state of their assets but also of their performances over the past year, as they think ahead about their plans for the next year and for the future beyond that. Most institutions take great pride in preparing their annual reports, which comes out of such stock-taking.

In that regard, we have before us the report of the Security Council (A/60/2), submitted in accordance with Article 24, paragraph 3, of the Charter. However, in looking at the report, my delegation regrets that the Council has once again wasted an opportunity to do an analytical review of its own work and performance. This year's report has reverted to the old style of reporting and is bereft of analytical content. My delegation also notes that the Council, in adopting that report, no longer discusses its contents or the Council's work performance.

My delegation does not pretend that it is easy to assess the work and performance of the Security Council. The Council's work is, of necessity, highly political. Since the end of the cold war it has also become extremely complex. It ranges from dispatching military operations and deploying election monitors to mandating arms inspections, imposing various kinds of sanctions on recalcitrant States, entities and individuals, establishing international criminal tribunals and commissions of inquiry, and requiring States to take various measures to counter terrorism and to report on the implementation of such measures. The legitimacy of the Council's imposing on States and individuals such a broad range of measures and requirements is often questioned these days. Legitimacy is an intangible thing that is hard to define, but we all know how important it is, because if an institution is perceived to lack legitimacy, then it

would cease to enjoy the support or consent of those affected by it. The Security Council is no exception. It needs to uphold, and be seen to be upholding, standards of fairness and justice in all its decision-making and actions, which should be legally justifiable in the context of the Charter of the United Nations.

The decisions made by the Council also need to be acceptable to Member States and the international community at large, in order for the Council to retain its legitimacy. As former Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar once noted, "The greater the Power, the higher is [its] responsibility to act and to be seen to act with justice" (*A/45/1, p. 17*). The Council can make the best possible decisions, but if those decisions are taken in exclusivity or if the Council fails or is unable to explain the rationale behind them to the general membership of the United Nations, then, over time, the decisions of the Security Council risk not being taken seriously.

That is the same reason that public communications these days is so important for all Governments and organizations that want to succeed. Even with the best possible performance, it is not enough just to perform well and expect people to accept by faith that this is what is good for them. Any institution that eschews transparency risks raising suspicions that something is amiss. Unfortunately, the Security Council's communications are often limited to making known its decisions and actions, but not disclosing how it arrived at them. That shortcoming has spawned discussions at numerous seminars, as well as many articles and books, about the Council's work and role. In short, if the Security Council is unwilling or unable to be more transparent, including by putting out good reports, then that work will find itself being outsourced.

In that regard, there is now a new initiative outside the United Nations that is aptly named the "Security Council Report", a project affiliated with Columbia University and directed by Colin Keating, former Permanent Representative of New Zealand to the United Nations. The Report will be officially launched on 6 December. According to Ambassador Keating,

> "This initiative responds to a need for consistent, high quality, publicly available information ... about the Council's activities and those of its subsidiary bodies. It reflects the belief that the lack of such information is a consistent barrier to the effective performance of the Council and a major handicap for United Nations Member States at large and the wider public."

There is obviously much scope for improving the working methods of the Security Council. However, in response to such criticisms and proposals for improvement, we have heard an interesting argument, namely, that it is not for the General Assembly to advise the Security Council on how to conduct its work. In that connection, the General Assembly and Security Council have been compared to legislative bodies where lower and upper houses are mutually exclusive.

However, such a comparison misses the point that, unlike such bodies, all Security Council members are members of the General Assembly. Moreover, under Article 10 of the Charter, the Assembly has the authority to discuss any questions or matters within the scope of the Charter or relating to the functions of any organ of the United Nations, as well as to make any recommendations to United Nations Members and to the Security Council.

It is in this spirit that some of us, the smaller countries in the United Nations, have informally circulated the text of a draft resolution containing some ideas for improving the working methods of the Security Council. The ideas contained in the draft text do not advocate abandoning the current system; rather, we hope to build on the existing system by proposing improvements to working methods that will align them more with the needs and norms of the current times. The result will benefit the Security Council, including its permanent members.

I would also like to make it clear that the ideas contained in the draft resolution are not cast in stone. My delegation, as well as others involved in the initiative, is ready and willing to engage in consultations and discussions with the rest of the membership of the United Nations — individually, in small groups and collectively with the entire membership — to improve the draft resolution. It is our hope that other Members of the United Nations will respond constructively to our suggestions for improving the working methods of the Security Council. We also hope that, through such dialogue, we will be able to arrive at a text that is broadly acceptable to the general membership of the United Nations.

Mr. Maurer (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Like many other delegations, I wish, on behalf of Switzerland, to extend my most sincere condolences to the Government of Jordan, as well as to all the families of victims who are today suffering the consequences of the terrorist attacks which yesterday struck Amman and all of Jordan.

At the outset, I would like to thank the Security Council for the submission of its annual report and welcome its presentation to the General Assembly today by the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation. The report contains much useful information, for which we are grateful. However, we also observe that the report is mainly a compilation of meetings held and documents issued by the Security Council during the reporting period. As a significant financial contributor to the United Nations budget, including to the peacekeeping operations and to special political missions approved by the Security Council, Switzerland would welcome a more analytical presentation of the challenges the Security Council faced over the past year.

At the recent Millennium + 5 Summit, the heads of State and Government of the Member States of the Organization acknowledged that reform of the Security Council was an essential element of the reform of the United Nations and that it was necessary to make progress both on the issue of Security Council enlargement and on the improvement of its working methods.

Switzerland strongly favours enlargement of the Security Council. We share the general view that the present composition of the Council no longer adequately reflects contemporary geopolitical realities. My country is in favour of an enlargement based on objective criteria. We are, moreover, of the opinion that enlargement should not mean that the right of veto should be extended to other countries, because this would complicate the decision-making process within the Council and would hinder its ability to take action.

In our view, it is also essential to continue to improve the working methods of the Security Council. The summit outcome document expressly invites the Council "to continue to adapt its working methods".

Many countries have recently called on the United Nations Secretariat to be more transparent and responsible in its actions in order to strengthen its own effectiveness and the effectiveness of the Organization as a whole. Switzerland fully agrees with this and thinks that the same principle should also apply to the Security Council. Its decisions are more likely to be understood and implemented if the Council takes the opinions of the larger membership into account to a greater degree.

Following a presentation by Switzerland in May 2005 of a non-paper on Security Council working methods, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Costa Rica, Jordan and Singapore, as a contribution to the Summit follow-up, decided to synthesize the most important proposals on working methods of recent years in a draft resolution. On 4 November, the co-authors of this draft distributed the draft text to all the diplomatic missions, with a view to discussing it informally with all Member States. On 18 November, we will hold an information session open to all.

The draft allows for the General Assembly to call upon the Security Council to consider a series of measures described in the annex and to report back to the General Assembly during the 60th session on the action it has taken pursuant to this draft. It is an instrument that is flexible in form, but it makes a number of specific proposals in response to recognized problems.

Part of the proposed measures aim at strengthening relations between the Security Council, the General Assembly and other main bodies of the United Nations. In particular, we propose making the discussion of the Council's annual report a platform for a more interactive exchange of views, and to encourage the Council to make use of the possibility, envisaged in the Charter, of presenting thematic reports, and in general, of favouring greater involvement of all Member States of the United Nations in the work of the Council.

Other measures proposed deal with the work of the subsidiary bodies of the Council. We propose greater transparency and we encourage the Council to invite, on a case-by-case basis, non-Member States to take part in the work of certain subsidiary bodies, when such States have a strong interest or relevant expertise. The draft resolution also stresses the importance of improving listing and delisting procedures, a point that was expressly acknowledged in the outcome document of the Millennium + 5 Summit.

This draft resolution also contains specific proposals on the use of the veto. The first of these

proposals invites a Permanent Member that has used its veto to explain publicly its reasons for doing so, in order to make its position better known to the entirety of Member States. The second proposal is designed to prevent — bearing in mind the responsibility to protect — the use of the veto in cases of genocide, crimes against humanity and serious violations of international humanitarian law. These proposals do not affect the substance of the veto.

This draft resolution has been formulated with care and in such a way as to take account of the respective roles and competencies of the Security Council and of the General Assembly, as defined in the Charter. This draft resolution is based on Article 10 of the Charter, which grants the General Assembly the competence to discuss the functions of other United Nations organs. We have chosen with care the terms of the draft resolution, so that it does not infringe upon the prerogatives and competencies of the Security Council, since it invites the Council to consider the measures described. It is up to the Security Council to decide on the action it wants to take in order to follow up on the proposals. The proposals are written in such a way as to offer an element of flexibility and a margin of interpretation. It aims at dialogue and at launching a discussion process, and does not seek to impose ready-made decisions.

The five co-authors of the draft resolution favour a comprehensive Security Council reform. We are strongly of the opinion that this draft resolution does not in any way affect the discussion on the enlargement of the Security Council. As a matter of fact, we hope that these complementary processes will be mutually reinforcing. The treatment of these two questions in parallel processes is justified by the differences in their nature and by differences in the decisions to be taken. Whatever model is chosen, enlargement of the Security Council will necessarily entail an amendment of the Charter of the United Nations. By contrast, improvements in the working methods of the Security Council primarily involve changes in the Council's practice, if necessary, through modifications of the rules of procedure. In our view, they do not require modifications of the Charter.

As has always been the case in the past, Switzerland and its partners wish to act constructively in pursuing this initiative. We are open to continuing the discussion of the contents of this draft resolution with the permanent members of the Security Council, as we have in the past, as well as to discussing the time of its tabling and the appropriate time to take action, in particular to avoid any interference with initiatives concerning the enlargement of the Council. In order not to interfere with the discussions on enlargement, this resolution could be tabled at the appropriate time under the item of the agenda relating to the follow-up to the Millennium Summit, and not under the one relating to the enlargement of the Security Council.

To sum up, our draft resolution on the working methods of the Security Council is of interest to all United Nations Members because it aims at increasing transparency and participation and will thus contribute to the effectiveness and legitimacy of the Security Council's action. The draft resolution should be acceptable to the five permanent members of the Security Council, as it respects the prerogatives of the Council. It should be acceptable to all proponents of enlargement, under whatever formula they choose, because it seeks mutually reinforcing reform and because it comes at an appropriate moment in the discussions on Security Council reform and in the follow-up to the 2005 High-level Plenary Meeting.

Switzerland believes that progress must be made where possible. We cannot allow ourselves to get caught up in tactical considerations, which threaten to paralyse the reform process at a time when changes are crucial to advancing the goals of the United Nations.

Mr. Jenie (Indonesia): At the outset, allow me to join the President and the representatives who have spoken before me to express our profound sorrow, condolences and sympathy to the delegation, the people and the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, as well as to the families who lost loved ones in the terrorist attacks in Amman. Indonesia condemns those barbaric terrorist acts.

My delegation is once again pleased to welcome the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly, which is contained in document A/60/2. The objective of that annual report is to provide Member States a summary of the work of the Council during the reporting period pertaining to its mandate: the maintenance of international peace and security. In view of the importance of the report, the Assembly's meetings on this item continue to be a good opportunity for us to review the work of the Council. For this reason, we are grateful to the members of the Council for their report, and to the General Assembly

for this opportunity to make a contribution to the debate.

As we all know, this meeting is also considering the report of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council (*A/59/47*). On behalf of my delegation, I would like to express my appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Jean Ping of Gabon, President of the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session, for his active role as Chairperson of the Working Group and for his determined efforts throughout the session to move these issues forward. We would also like to thank Ambassadors Paulette Bethel of the Bahamas and Christian Wenaweser of Liechtenstein, Vice-Chairpersons of the Working Group, for their diligence and hard work in the service of the Group.

The report of the Security Council provides a useful outline of its work throughout the period under consideration, clearly demonstrating an upward trend in the scope and volume of the Council's activities. Among the areas of focus were the conflicts in several areas of Africa, the situation in the Middle East and terrorism. We are grateful to the members of the Council for their attention to those and many other issues.

Unfortunately, we must observe that the report is still far too much an enumeration of facts and not enough of a report that explains how or why certain decisions or courses of action were preferred over others. For many years, delegations have called on the Security Council to ensure that its report provides an analysis that fulfils that need. Until that happens, the annual report can have only a rather limited value. We urge the Council to pay attention to that issue. Our suggestion is that it should set clear guidelines to guide each annual analysis of its work. Such guidelines will prevent the analysis from requiring protracted annual negotiations before it can be prepared for the benefit of Member States. On that question, it is instructive that the report of the Open-ended Working Group also reflects the concern of delegations that the Security Council report "should be factual, comprehensive, substantive and analytical" (*A/59/47, annex II, para. 5*). Despite those concerns, we commend the Council for its work on peace and security issues throughout the period, particularly on peacekeeping, conflict resolution and terrorism.

Let me now turn to the report of the Open-ended Working Group. It is significant to note that there is provisional agreement on items under cluster II, which deals with methods of work. It is a matter of concern that we have not made much concrete progress on the substantive issues since the Working Group began its assignment, 11 years ago.

My delegation would like to reiterate its position that enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations demands a strong and active relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly, and indeed among all the organs. The World Summit Outcome made that point when it stated that

> "in order to efficiently perform their respective mandates as provided under the Charter, United Nations bodies should develop good cooperation and coordination in the common endeavour of building a more effective United Nations" (*resolution 60/1, para. 147*).

The Security Council is further called upon to adapt its methods of work in order to increase non-members' involvement in its work.

On the issue of accountability, in particular the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly, my delegation is concerned about the Council's gradual encroachment on the powers and mandate of the General Assembly. The Council should refrain from addressing thematic issues, since those fall within the purview of the Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Indeed, there should be a clear demarcation of the respective fields of competence of the Assembly and the Council. Consultations between the Presidents of those principal organs should be institutionalized as soon as possible. Furthermore, my delegation considers that the Security Council ought to convene more formal meetings on specific issues under its consideration, in order that it might learn of, and be enriched by, the views of interested parties.

The report of the Working Group also underlines the desire of troop-contributing countries to enjoy stronger involvement in the decision-making processes of the Council, including at the early stages of mission planning. We share that position, because it will enhance unity among the parties in a peacekeeping process.

With regard to the use of sanctions, we reiterate our position that they should be used only as a last

resort, and after other means available to the Council have been exhausted.

Turning now to the issue of subsidiary organs, our position is that their work should be more accessible to Member States in general. Overall, the use of such organs should also be curtailed.

Indonesia has always supported a comprehensive approach to United Nations reform and will continue to do so. That exercise is overdue. It is most welcome that at the world summit heads of State or Government offered their support for early reform of the Council as an essential element of the effort to reform the Organization to make it more broadly representative, efficient and transparent, and thus to further enhance its effectiveness and the legitimacy and implementation of its decisions. They also committed themselves to a process that would achieve a decision to that end by the end of 2005.

It is our expectation that reform of the Council will help to strengthen the body and address these concerns by providing accountability, transparency and representativeness. In that connection, my delegation takes note of the draft resolution proposed by the delegations of Costa Rica, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Singapore and Switzerland. It is our hope that the President will be able to conduct further consultations on this matter and to reach the widest acceptable compromise among Member States.

In the light of those issues, my delegation believes that there is an urgent need for the members of the Security Council — particularly the permanent members — to respond positively to the substantive input being provided by the majority of Member States by showing the political will to act. Such a response should lead to an improvement in the Council's working methods.

Finally, members will recall that a few months ago, this body was thrown into an unusual situation, involving contestants for positions in an expanded membership of the Security Council. That experience, in which the issue of expansion completely overshadowed other major priority issues demanding our attention, including other aspects of United Nations reform, jeopardized the unity of the Organization. It is Indonesia's conviction that the unity of Member States remains of the utmost importance at all times. In that regard, we must take care to address equitably all issues of common interest in order to avoid divisiveness in the future. Indonesia is fully supportive of efforts to find a fresh approach to this matter in the spirit of unity.

Mr. Choi Young-jin (Republic of Korea): At the outset, I would like to convey my delegation's deep condolences to the victims of the bomb attacks that occurred in Jordan yesterday. We condemn in the strongest terms those heinous acts of terrorism targeted against innocent civilians. Our sympathy is with the people and the Government of Jordan at this time of trial.

I should like to thank the President of the Security Council for this month, Ambassador Denisov of the Russian Federation, for introducing the annual report of the Council (*A/60/2*). According to the report, the volume and scope of the Council's activities continued to grow over the past year. We note with concern that Africa remains the context for the majority of issues before the Security Council, accounting for 60 percent of its agenda.

There have been some positive developments in Africa. Burundi, Guinea-Bissau and Liberia seem to be on track in their transition from conflict to stability, with the process of nation-building under way and bolstered by recent successful elections. In many other countries, however, instability continues. In particular, the humanitarian crisis in the Darfur region of western Sudan is still going on, and fresh reports of increasing violence indicate that the situation is not improving. Another area of serious concern is Côte d'Ivoire, where elections could not take place as scheduled and anxieties are increasing. In addition, we are deeply concerned about the recent escalation of the tensions between Ethiopia and Eritrea and the restrictions imposed unilaterally on the movement of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea. We urge both countries to exercise maximum restraint.

We appreciate the Security Council's active efforts to maintain peace and prevent further disputes in Africa through the recent establishment of United Nations missions in several countries on the continent. We also welcome the Council's efforts to find long-term solutions to African issues by holding a constructive open debate on the topic and by adopting resolution 1625 (2005), on the prevention of conflict, particularly in Africa, at a summit-level Council meeting.

During the past year, the Security Council continued to devote considerable attention to the situation in Iraq. The period saw the achievement of significant political benchmarks on Iraq's path towards democracy, including the parliamentary elections in January and the formation of the Transitional Government in May. The approval of the draft constitution by national referendum last month demonstrated the desire of the Iraqi people to determine their own political future. We look forward to the upcoming general elections on 15 December, which we hope can serve as a foundation on which lasting institutions and national reconciliation can be built.

For its part, the Republic of Korea is continuing to help the Iraqi people to rebuild their country. In the light of the Iraqi Government's recent request, we welcome the adoption of Security Council resolution 1637 (2005), which extends the mandate of the multinational force in Iraq. The Security Council must continue to play an important role in stabilizing and reconstructing Iraq and in facilitating its transition to a fully representative Government.

With regard to Lebanon, we support the Security Council's continuing efforts to take follow-up actions in response to the terrorist bombing that killed former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and others. The Council's unanimous adoption of resolution 1636 (2005) at the ministerial-level meeting last week sent a strong and clear message. That resolution must be implemented scrupulously.

Elsewhere in Asia, it is encouraging that Afghanistan has made progress in security and nation-building, with constant and broad assistance from the international community. In particular, we commend the holding of parliamentary and provincial elections in September, which completed the Bonn process. We also note with appreciation that, in cooperation with the United Nations, Timor-Leste has been successfully building solid foundations for peace and development for the past several years. We are confident that, building upon the progress made so far, Timor-Leste will become a model case of successful transition from conflict to peace and long-term development.

The past year saw terrorist attacks in London, Egypt, Iraq, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, India, Lebanon and elsewhere around the world — most recently in Jordan yesterday — demonstrating once again that no country and no individual is safe from terrorist attack. The international community must therefore stand united against terrorism. In that regard, the Republic of Korea notes with satisfaction that the Security Council continues to play a leading role in combating terrorism, in particular through its three Committees on the matter. Coordination and cooperation among those Committees should be further enhanced to make the Council's counter-terrorism activities all the more effective.

Let me now briefly turn to reform of the Security Council. This year, we had a very intensive discussion on the issue of Council expansion, and various proposals were put forward. Unfortunately, those discussions did not lead to much progress. The Republic of Korea has made it clear that it supports the idea of a reformed Security Council that is more representative, accountable and effective. In the same vein, we have opposed any expansion of the permanent membership. I will refrain from reiterating in detail my country's position on Security Council reform. I only hope that, with our collective wisdom, we can reform the Council so that it can better fulfil its mandate in the future.

We appreciate the efforts of the Open-ended Working Group to improve the Council's working methods. We also acknowledge the steps taken thus far by the Council to increase the transparency of its work and the involvement of non-Council members. We believe that, building on that progress, we need to undertake further reform of the Council's working methods to make the Council more transparent, democratic and efficient.

Mr. Dolgov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): This meeting of the General Assembly is taking place in the context of the common understanding endorsed by world leaders at the 2005 High-level Plenary Meeting with regard to the need for comprehensive strengthening of the United Nations as the central multilateral institution to address international relations and ensure global security and stability. The summit outcome document (*resolution 60/1*) set out the generally acceptable bases for continuing the collective effort to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations on the basis of a comprehensive approach.

In addition, the run-up to the summit once again underscored serious differences on the approach to

Security Council reform. Attempts to force a decision on that important problem have threatened that the drastic polarization of the positions of Member States would cause a rift in the United Nations. In such a climate it was not possible to reach a mutually acceptable solution to the matter of the expansion of the membership of the Security Council by the holding of the summit in September. The Russian Federation is certain that the search for an effective common denominator on this problem must be continued, so that an increase in the membership of the Council does not have a negative impact on the efforts of either the United Nations or the international community to address pressing global policy problems.

We are prepared to lend our agreement to any reasonable option for an increase in Security Council membership, provided it enjoys the broadest consensus possible. As we understand it, such consensus presupposes far more robust political support for the anticipated final outcome than the legally required two-thirds vote in the General Assembly.

Russia has consistently believed that reform must lead to further enhancing the effectiveness of the Security Council through a limited increase in its membership. The Council must be more representative and must reflect changing international realities. Those goals can be achieved above all by bringing influential developing countries into the Council, as well as developed countries. Russia's position with regard to specific candidatures for permanent membership in the Council is well known, and we have repeatedly reaffirmed it.

Enhancing the representative character of the Security Council should not erode its effectiveness. That is why Russia calls for maintaining the Security Council's compact character, and why we believe that the number of members of a reformed Council should not exceed a reasonable number. On a preliminary basis, we have already had an opportunity to define such a number as 20-plus.

Russia is certain that ideas intended to encroach upon the prerogatives and powers of the current permanent members of the Security Council, including the right to the veto, are counterproductive. Advancing such ideas, which have no possibility of implementation, simply serves to arouse emotions and do not make it any easier to achieve agreement on the parameters for Security Council reform.

Russia will continue to contribute to the Security Council's efforts to improve its methods of work, increase transparency and deepen its interaction with non-members of the Council, in particular with countries contributing troops to peacekeeping operations. That position is in line with the approach taken by our Security Council partners, as has been reaffirmed in particular by today's debate. With regard to that fundamental position, Russia will continue to contribute constructively to achieving the broadest possible consensus on all aspects of Security Council reform, in the interest of comprehensively strengthening the central role of the United Nations in world affairs.

Mr. Duclos (France) (*spoke in French*): As other colleagues have done before me, I would like at the outset to convey our heartfelt condolences to the people and the Government of Jordan on the recent attacks in that country.

The report on the activities of the Security Council (*A/60/2*), which was introduced to the General Assembly by the Russian presidency of the Council, outlines all the activities undertaken by the Council during the reporting period. I thank Ambassador Denisov for his introduction. I believe that this exercise contributes positively to ensuring transparency and dialogue in the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council.

I shall not retrace Ambassador Denisov's excellent presentation. I would simply like rather to underscore a number of what my country views as key points. I shall do so in an analytical manner, in response to concerns raised by a number of colleagues. In doing so, I shall highlight three themes.

With regard to the first theme, the Security Council has continued to shoulder its primary responsibilities with regard to crisis management, concerning in particular the African continent. I am pleased to underscore the fact that it has often done so in close cooperation with the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States and other African organizations. Allow me also to point out that, on the initiative of Benin, the 14 September Security Council summit adopted a particularly innovative resolution on the subject of the prevention of conflict, Security Council resolution 1625 (2005).

In addition to African issues, allow me also to highlight the matter of Lebanon. The Security Council

has been united in addressing this issue, so that that country may be able to regain its full sovereignty, including by shedding light on, and rendering justice in, the case of the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri.

With regard to the second theme in the work of the Security Council, the Council is meeting its responsibilities in the context of combating new threats, especially with regard to terrorism and proliferation. In that connection, I would note the importance of resolution 1624 (2005), adopted at the 14 September summit, on the issue of combating terrorism. Let me also mention that the Security Council is taking action on other issues — for example, the protection of children in armed conflict.

With regard to the third theme, the Council has increasingly devoted attention to the fight against impunity. This year, the Council met with the Presidents of the International Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda, as well as with the President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone. For the first time, the Council also met with the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court on the issue of Darfur shortly after the Court took up the case. I would also note that the Council devoted a meeting to the fight against impunity in Burundi.

Beyond the record of activities, one of the important lessons of the past year is that the Security Council in practice is continuing to enhance what are called its working methods. We are seeing an ongoing adaptation of these methods and, specifically, an evolution towards greater transparency and openness.

For example, more than in the past, the Security Council in recent months has taken up the concerns of the troop-contributing countries. We witnessed this recently, thanks to the initiative of Japan, with respect to the crisis between Ethiopia and Eritrea. The Council has also given particular attention to better involving States not members of the Council. For example, it has made sure that, within the framework of the various sanctions committees, it takes better account of the concerns of neighbouring countries.

The thematic debates, which are sometimes criticized, have also been an opportunity for the Security Council to learn more about the views of other Member States that are not Council members. Lastly, in the same spirit, I would note that the Security Council has worked to further bring on board non-State actors in terms of its work. The Arria-formula meetings have been used more frequently in order to meet with civil society and non-governmental organizations.

Behind this progress of recent years, there is obviously the commitment to seek in a pragmatic way a balance between the fact that the Council does need to meet its responsibilities — all of its responsibilities — and its commitment to being more open and to listen to the sensibilities of States not members of the Council or other actors that might have a useful role in terms of issues or crises that are being dealt with by the Council.

This brings me to the issue of Security Council reform. The heads of State and Government reaffirmed two months ago that Security Council reform was a central element in the United Nations reform. They undertook to ensure that this reform would occur as soon as possible. Let me say that this reflects wisdom. It seems to us that, in this area, one needs to show a spirit of responsibility and, therefore, to do nothing that would weaken our organ, whose mandate is to ensure international peace and security. At the same time, we must refuse to remain paralysed, because that would be detrimental not just to this or that State but to our entire Organization.

A discussion has been under way for months. Some say it was an acrimonious debate that carried the seeds of division. We believe that this has been a healthy debate, useful to better clarify what is at stake and, perhaps, to reconcile points of view.

I would say that, for our country, the more the subject was discussed and the more our own views were corroborated, it appeared that a just, effective solution entailed expansion in the two categories of members, permanent and non-permanent. It also seemed to us essential that Africa have its full due place within a Security Council reformed accordingly. And we support, more than ever, the aspirations of Germany, Japan, India and Brazil.

The draft resolution submitted to the General Assembly by 31 sponsors last July continues to be fully relevant and pertinent. We reiterate our support for this text and, more than ever, believe that it offers a good compromise, one that could be accepted by the broadest number. In addition, it has the added advantage of dealing with two inseparable elements of Council reform — that is, the continuing improvement

of its working methods and the expansion of its membership.

I would like to comment on this last point. We believe that if we are to deal exclusively with the issue of continuing to improve the working methods, that would be detrimental to the issue of expansion of the Security Council's membership. We all know that for months, or even years, there has been an urgent need to improve the functioning of our Organization.

To sum up, we express the hope that the General Assembly, which before the end of next month is to take stock of progress made towards reforming the Security Council, will be in a position to report that real progress has been made.

Mr. Stagno Ugarte (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me first to join previous speakers in expressing our most sincere and heartfelt condolences to the Kingdom of Jordan on the terrorist attacks that took place yesterday in Amman.

In compliance with the obligation contained in Article 24 of the Charter, the Security Council today presents its annual report to the General Assembly for consideration and adoption. The report follows the revised format adopted in 2002 that introduced a number of improvements aimed at facilitating its consideration. However, contrary to the practice begun in 2002, when the report was discussed in depth at an open meeting of the Security Council — the 4616th meeting, held on 26 September — on this occasion, unfortunately, that precedent has been discontinued. Indeed, the Council held only a short formal meeting, which lasted only five minutes.

I believe it appropriate to refer to the Council's 4616th meeting, given that the 23 pages of its procès-verbal (*S/PV.4616*), containing the statements by the Council members, offer much greater insight into the manner in which the Council really works than do the 302 pages of the 2001-2002 annual report. Therefore, in discontinuing the practice of holding open meetings of the Council to discuss the substance of its annual report — in this case the 258-page report for the 2004-2005 period — we are truly taking a step backwards in terms of the Council's working methods.

Costa Rica is particularly proud to be an integral part of the group of five small nations — the "Small Five" (S-5) — which has authored and sponsored the most comprehensive draft resolution in recent memory on the working methods of the Security Council. Allow me to pay tribute to Switzerland for having spearheaded this joint effort to improve the internal procedures of the United Nations organ of most limited composition. Since some of our "Small Five" partners have already presented in detail our proposal, which has been unofficially distributed, I would like to concentrate on other aspects related to the Council's working methods and to the initiative in question.

I do not wish here to reiterate once again our position on Security Council reform. Let me simply reaffirm our conviction that the Council requires a comprehensive reform that will enhance its transparency, democracy and effectiveness, as well as improve Council rotation, so as to enable it to act on behalf of all Member States and in strict compliance with the Charter.

In that regard, we believe it the time has come to tackle the other side of reform, that is, the Council's working methods. However, our interest in the Council's working methods should not be interpreted as a lack of interest in the Council's expansion. We simply believe that consideration of working methods always suffers if it is tackled simultaneously and jointly with the issue of expansion.

In fact, and much to our disappointment, the consultations on Security Council reform that have been held in recent months have concentrated on its expansion alone. We are convinced that this is not sufficient, as we have the opportunity to show greater ambition and to move beyond mere readjustments to work jointly to reach a new consensus on the way in which the Organization must confront current threats. The democracy, transparency and accountability that must necessarily accompany the process of taking decisions that at times are binding on us all are dependent primarily on the working methods used.

While in the past we have had concerns regarding the working methods of the Security Council, such concerns have only multiplied given what we know of the role played by the Council in the mismanagement of the oil-for-food programme. Costa Rica believes that reform of the working methods of the Council is an integral part of the broader management and oversight reform effort currently under way in the United Nations. We believe that this logical conclusion can be drawn from the final report of the Independent Inquiry Committee, dated 7 September 2005, which made it

abundantly clear that the lack of transparency in the proceedings of the Security Council and of its subsidiary organs, in particular the Committee established pursuant to resolution 661 (1990), aggravated problems related to the management of the oil-for-food programme. Costa Rica has taken due note of the many though scattered references made by the Volcker Committee to the Council's working methods.

Because of our commitment to a United Nations endowed with efficient and transparent management and oversight mechanisms, we believe that there is a need to tackle management and oversight reform in a cross-cutting fashion, covering every aspect of this Organization if required. In that context, we cannot but conclude, on the basis of the Volcker report, that the internal management and oversight of the Security Council must be an integral part of the further overall management and oversight reform efforts undertaken. For that reason, we believe that it is particularly pressing to initiate a joint discussion in the General Assembly on the working methods of the Council.

There truly has not been an effort of comparable scope to that of the "Small Five" proposal since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 267 (III), to which I will refer in more detail later. Paradoxically, although the Open-ended Working Group has dealt with both cluster I and cluster II issues every year since 1993 — with the sole exception of the Razali proposal, which included significant reforms to the working methods of the Security Council — efforts to reform the Council have always given short shrift to its working methods. Costa Rica believes that it is high time that the General Assembly send an unequivocal message to the Council that it cannot continue to function if its transparency and accountability are not enhanced.

Given that the S-5 initiative was drafted in a spirit of caution and respect, inviting the Security Council to consider a series of measures enumerated in the annex, it is surprising to us that some are seeking to evade the issue of improvements by questioning the authority of the General Assembly in such matters. Allow me briefly to address some of the arguments that some Member States have advanced to counter the initiative put forward by the S-5.

I think that it is particularly important to restate the broad prerogatives that Article 10 of the Charter confers on the General Assembly. While its "comprehensive jurisdiction" clause is not regularly cited, Article 10 is unequivocally clear as to the statutory right of the General Assembly to discuss any question relating to the powers and functions of any organ of the United Nations. The General Assembly is not exceeding its authority when it reviews the working procedures of the Security Council; on the contrary, it is complying fully with its mandate under the Charter.

While some may argue that Article 12 expressly limits the General Assembly's powers of consideration and discussion, this is a purely procedural and temporary restriction that aims to avoid any duplication of work between the Security Council and the General Assembly, as can be ascertained from the fact that the Security Council has primary but not sole responsibility on matters pertaining to the maintenance of international peace and security. Uniting for Peace — resolution 377 (V) — is concrete evidence of the role that the General Assembly can and at times must play if the Security Council is unable to shoulder and discharge its Charter-mandated responsibilities. However, that argument simply does not apply in this case, because the S-5 initiative is merely an invitation to the Council to consider a series of purely functional and operational proposals that do not address or prejudge any situation in particular.

Some also say that Article 30 of the Charter stipulates that the Security Council shall adopt its own rules of procedure. That is certainly true. But it is ironic that some Council members take refuge in that Article when we have been using provisional rules of procedure for 60 years now, in contravention of the same Charter. Others argue that it is not necessary to formally adopt the rules of procedure, because, in the best Anglo-American tradition, Article 30 permits the gradual development and alteration of practice. If that were so, we should wonder why the same tradition has not been followed with the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, which have the same power to adopt their own rules of procedure under other Articles of the Charter that were written in exactly the same manner as Article 30. The Charter provides no mandate to interpret Article 30 in the Anglo-American tradition and the other Articles in the Continental tradition.

Moreover, with regard to the General Assembly's supposed interference in the internal affairs of the Security Council — which, as already demonstrated, is

totally consistent with the comprehensive jurisdiction clause of Article 10 — I wish to refer to practice. At its 197th meeting, on 27 August 1947, the Security Council considered General Assembly resolution 40 (I). In that resolution, the General Assembly

> "Recommends to the Security Council the early adoption of practices and procedures, consistent with the Charter, to assist in reducing the difficulties in the application of Article 27 and to ensure the prompt and effective exercise by the Security Council of its functions; and
>
> "Further recommends that, in developing such practices and procedures, the Security Council take into consideration the views expressed by Members of the United Nations during the second part of the first session of the General Assembly."

Likewise, at its 224th meeting, on 19 December 1947, the Security Council considered General Assembly resolution 117 (II). It should be stressed that the resolution's sole preambular paragraph specifically says,

> "The General Assembly, in the exercise of its power to make recommendations relating to the powers and functions of any organs of the United Nations (Article 10 of the Charter)"

Finally, I should like to invite all Members to study General Assembly resolution 267 (III), adopted on 14 April 1949 with the affirmative vote of four permanent members — only the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics voted against it — which has many formal and procedural similarities to the current initiative of the S-5. I have circulated a copy of that resolution so that members may arrive at their own conclusions.

Mr. Wenaweser (Liechtenstein): We welcome today's joint debate not only as a measure to revitalize the work of the General Assembly, but even more because we believe that the issues of the report of the Security Council and Council reform are closely linked in substance.

During the months leading up to the summit, we witnessed impressive and orchestrated efforts to bring about reform of the Security Council — reform that we agree is long overdue. Those concerted diplomatic efforts were successful in bringing the topic of Council reform to the forefront of our agenda, and they in fact dominated the discussions in this building throughout the summer. They did not result, however, in the achievement of the declared goal of Council reform. In September, our heads of State or Government committed themselves to early reform of the Council and mandated the General Assembly to review progress made on that topic by the end of this year. With no concrete proposal left on the table, we seem to be in a place similar to where we were a year ago. The task immediately before us thus consists of re-creating the momentum for Security Council reform.

As members are aware, we, together with four like-minded States, have circulated a draft resolution on the issue of the Security Council's working methods. The Assembly has heard presentations by several of our co-authors — including, immediately preceding, the representative of Costa Rica, and in particular the representative of Switzerland, who made an excellent presentation on the substance of our draft resolution. I will thus limit my comments to three aspects of the draft resolution: its relationship to enlargement, its foundation in the outcome document (*resolution 60/1*) and its non-confrontational nature. We are pleased that the draft resolution is receiving much attention in the corridors, in informal discussions and in today's debate, which we hope will contribute to an informed discussion of our initiative.

All five of the States that launched the initiative strongly support enlargement of the Security Council, although we do not agree among ourselves on the modalities of such enlargement. We concur, however, in the view that the Council's working methods deserve the same attention and the same careful the consideration as the politically charged topic of enlargement. For small States in particular — and, in fact, for a large majority of the membership — our daily interaction with the Council is at least as important as the question of who serves on it as a member.

The three draft resolutions submitted in the course of this year, which deal with both aspects of reform — expansion and working methods — illustrate clearly that combining the two aspects would inevitably be to the detriment of working methods. We therefore concluded some months ago that addressing the two closely interlinked topics in a complementary manner is the only way to achieve satisfactory results in both areas. Moreover, while the two aspects are clearly two sides of the same coin, we see a marked difference in substance that further justifies separate

resolutions. Enlargement will always lead to a Charter amendment and thus will be completed once the necessary ratifications are in place. On the other hand, adapting the working methods is an ongoing process — based on a dialogue among Member States — that does not lead to a Charter amendment.

Given the lack of momentum in favour of enlargement and the continued absence of a magic formula for it, we are of the view that this is a good time to establish a basis for such a dialogue between the Security Council and the membership at large on working methods with a view to enhancing transparency, legitimacy, accountability and effectiveness, in accordance with the outcome document. We firmly believe that effectively addressing the issue of working methods will help to build momentum for enlargement as well and will illustrate the need to address the second issue of Security Council reform.

As I have stated, the initiative on working methods is solidly grounded in the outcome document, specifically in its paragraphs 152 to 154. The summit has already addressed, at the level of the General Assembly, the issue of working methods in general but clear terms, indeed, that is nothing new, as the Open-ended Working Group, a subsidiary body of the Assembly, of which I have the honour to be a Vice-Chairperson, has been dealing with the issue for more than a decade. The draft resolution circulated among the membership is thus but an extension of the outcome document, and indeed follows up on the relevant recommendation contained therein. The first heading of the 18 measures proposed for consideration in the annex to the draft resolution deals with the question of the relationship between the Security Council and other principal organs, in particular the General Assembly. In fact, the draft resolution itself is a reflection of that relationship, which we believe should be a mutually reinforcing and open one.

We agree with those who argue that the Security Council is the master of its own procedures and therefore has the sole competence to decide on all procedural aspects of its work, including its working methods. Our draft resolution is aimed at reconciling that undeniable fact with the provision of the Charter that states that the Security Council carries out its duties on behalf of all Members of the Organization. It is therefore crucial that the Council engage in a dialogue with the membership on how best to conduct its work.

The work of the Council has clearly entered a new era since the end of the cold war. Statistical figures regarding such things as the number of meetings and of resolutions adopted illustrate that point quite clearly. Moreover, the Council has significantly expanded its activities into areas that were previously the domain of other bodies of the United Nations, in particular the General Assembly, and the role of its subsidiary organs has increased dramatically. That increase in activities, including in the area of sanctions, leads to the need for stronger involvement of the membership at large in the design of the relevant decisions of the Council. The political will of Member States is the main tool at the disposal of the Council to ensure the effective implementation of such resolutions. More transparency and stronger involvement by States will make a significant contribution to the effective implementation of the Council's decisions, as well as to their legitimacy.

The overriding goal of the draft resolution is therefore to strengthen the standing of the Security Council and to enhance the implementation of its decisions, and thus its effectiveness.

We fully support the manner in which Mr. Eliasson is guiding us in the implementation of, and follow-up to, the September summit. The summit left more undecided than we had hoped. There is consequently more left to do than we had anticipated. We agree that, in the circumstances, Security Council reform cannot be at the top of our agenda for the time being. At the same time of course, the agreement in the outcome document regarding early reform must not be ignored. It therefore seems advisable to gradually and cautiously build up the necessary political momentum that can result in effective change and real reform, with the strongest possible political support from the membership. We have circulated our draft resolution in order to make a contribution to that end. We will continue to engage in open dialogue with everyone who has a genuine interest in this topic, and we hope that this initiative will find broad support among the membership.

Mr. Toro Jiménez (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to condemn the terrorist attacks that took place yesterday in Jordan. I

express our condolences to the people and the Government of Jordan, as well as to the families of the victims of those heinous acts.

The delegation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela would like to thank the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation for his introduction of the report of the Security Council on its activities for the period 1 August 2004 to 31 July 2005 (*A/60/2*). In that connection, I wish to take this opportunity to state our position with regard to the work of the Security Council.

The report before us today highlights the significant growth, in both scope and volume, in the activities of the Security Council. Africa once again had a prominent place on the Council's programme of work. The Council has also given Africa higher priority in the fight against terrorism. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela attaches great importance to threats to international peace and security caused by acts of terrorism.

However, we also adamantly condemn the occupation of Iraq and the acts carried out by foreign military forces in that country. We wish to underscore the importance of initiating an investigation into the recent allegation of the use of lethal chemical weapons against the Iraqi people during the occupation of Fallujah.

We are also concerned about conflicts in the Middle East, especially the ongoing non-recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination that has resulted from Israel's construction of the separation wall on Palestinian territory and the consequences of that undertaking for the human rights of the Palestinian people.

We also wish to condemn the siege on Iran and the consistent failure to recognize its legitimate right to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

We are concerned as well about the situation in the fraternal country of Haiti, whose people continue to be overwhelmed by poverty, helplessness and violence despite the fact that there is a peacebuilding operation in that country — or is it a peacekeeping operation? We are not quite sure what kind of operation it is.

We are also concerned about the situation in Africa in general, where there seem to be subtle attempts to covertly impose a new form of neo-colonialism.

Venezuela agrees wholeheartedly with the importance placed on those matters. However, we note that the Security Council has increasingly resorted to Chapter VII of the Charter in addressing issues that are not necessarily threats to international peace and security. In fact, an effort is now being made to confer legitimacy on that practice through the proposed reform of the United Nations. Moreover, we believe that the Council should instead, as appropriate, be more scrupulous to act under other relevant chapters of the Charter — such as Chapter VI, pertaining to the pacific settlement of disputes. In addition, we would like to reaffirm the importance for the Council to clearly define its authority and to focus on the functions and responsibilities conferred upon it by the Charter, so as to avoid repeated encroachment upon functions that fall within the purview of the General Assembly.

In that context, the Security Council should, as we have said, deal solely with matters that represent a threat to international peace and security and should remove from its agenda questions that have lead the Council to intervene with increasing frequency in the internal affairs of States.

We disapprove of the framework that has been created with a new generation of peacekeeping operations, which in their latest incarnation are called "peacebuilding operations" and are intended as a response to post-conflict situations. These operations seek to take on, in addition to the often debatable extension of the presence of Blue Helmets in the territory of United Nations Member States, the civilian tasks of reconstructing or re-establishing States that have incorrectly and unjustifiably been categorized as failed States and States immersed in internal conflicts. Taking on such tasks directly infringes on the right of peoples to freely choose their own model of development and their own manner of restructuring their political institutions. The ideological basis for these so-called peacebuilding operations, as they are envisaged in the discussions under way in the Organization, is the idea of a powerless, failed State. Such concepts derive from an analysis that lacks historical perspective and seeks to conceal realities of the contemporary world that cannot be ignored.

First, there is a tacit attempt to blame the collapse of a State of the type mentioned on the presumed ineptitude of its Government and people, who are rather the victims of the situation than responsible for

the outcome that led to the establishment of a peacebuilding operation. We know that, on the contrary, in some cases, the weakness of States categorized as failed States is, in general, rooted in the State's origins, because, generally speaking, many States were created as dependent and subordinate political and economic entities, in other words, as foreign protectorates or semi-protectorates of a neo-colonial character. If one opens one's eyes to reality, it can be seen that those countries have been the victim of destabilizing processes created by the "empire" and its allies, which deliberately unleash internal crises and wars in such States with the aim of recreating those States in conformity with the standards imposed by the world's centres of power and contrary to the cardinal principle of the self-determination of peoples.

It is, therefore, a fundamental mistake to think that the international community has the right or the power to determine which institutions need to be restructured for a so-called non-functioning State to be able to carry out its basic functions. In our opinion, as stated in the Charter of the United Nations, only the people of the State concerned have the collective and inalienable right to decide the foundation and structure of their model of development and their future destiny. In addition, those operations clearly are, or end up being, by definition, acts of repression, intervention and intimidation, in contravention of the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

United Nations peacekeeping operations must be a tool used for the strict fulfilment of the provisions of the Charter and must conform without reservation, with the principles of the consent of the parties involved, impartiality and the non-use of force except in the case of legitimate defence, as established in Chapter VII of the Charter. Moreover, the mandates of those missions must not be ambiguous, because that leaves the parties involved hostage to the Security Council. Decisions taken with regard to peacekeeping operations must conform to the fundamental principles of international law, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, that is, unconditional respect for State sovereignty, non-interference in the internal affairs of States and the self-determination of peoples. In addition, peacekeeping operations must have the financing necessary to attain the desired result of lasting and sustainable peace.

In any case, peacekeeping operations do not contribute any kind of solution with respect to the deep-rooted causes of the conflicts that affect numerous Member States. Those causes are often serious and chronic socio-economic problems resulting from policies imposed by illegitimate Governments that are subordinate to foreign policies that are guided by the interests of multinational corporations and imperialist States.

For that reason, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela favours the promotion of an economic development of peoples that is free of external pressures, obstacles or interventions, because that is the only effective approach for the peaceful prevention of conflicts. We do not accept the pretext that these are so-called humanitarian interventions, nor can we accept the manipulation of the issue of human rights as the reason for imposing on States coercive measures that are not in conformity with the Charter.

We cannot agree with the opinion that the so-called international community — a euphemism that is often used to present the opinion and the dominant will of the great Powers and their court of allies — holds a presumed natural right and responsibility to take direct actions to protect peoples, in disregard of the borders and the authority of States. Nor does it hold a direct international guardianship allowing it to take repressive action against States and persons presumed to be the authors of crimes of genocide, ethnic cleansing, crimes against humanity or, simply, the so-called systematic violation of human rights. That novel false and pernicious institution of guardianship and international responsibility, whose establishment some propose, as can be inferred from statements we have heard, would seek to empower the Security Council to take coercive measures against States, which always turn out to be the same ones: developing States and the States of the South, which are continually accused of systematic violations of human rights. That is done — or is attempted — through the accumulation of successive condemnations couched in a series of resolutions. This then leads to the creation of dossiers on certain States so they can be punished using so-called humanitarian interventions. This all is done with the avowed purpose of seeking to ensure the protection of human security. Human security is another concept used as a pretext and a camouflage for unjustifiable interference in the internal affairs of States.

My delegation believes that sanctions against States should be considered only as a final measure of last resort in extreme situations. They must not be used

as a concealed means of overthrowing a State's legitimate authority and they must be employed in strict accordance with the provisions of the United Nations Charter and international law.

The fight against terrorism is one of the pillars of the foreign policy of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. The Venezuelan people and Government — with one voice — condemn and reject terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, as a deadly political tool used to kill and intimidate innocent, weak and helpless people anywhere in the world. Terrorism includes the consequences for civilian populations — often justified as collateral damage — resulting from a foreign invasion.

At the same time, we wish to make our position clear. In our judgement, the legitimate resistance of a people against foreign occupation or invasion does not constitute terrorism. In our view, a significant, effective and undeniable component of terrorism can also be seen in the daily round of falsehoods, distortions and manipulations disseminated by the national and international press serving imperialism and its allies, which conceals, distorts and prevents clear understanding of the achievements of peoples who are exercising their right to self-determination and creating their own future by trying to make another world possible.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has described two instances of terrorism to the Security Council. The first involves the case of a terrorist of Venezuelan nationality, Luis Posada Carriles, who is now in the United States with what appears to be refugee status. Posada Carriles is a fugitive from Venezuelan justice. He escaped from a prison in Venezuela, where he was being detained and awaiting trial for the downing of a Cuban aeroplane that resulted in the death of 73 crew members and passengers in 1976. Our country has requested extradition from the Government of the United States of America, on the basis of the present extradition treaty in force between our Republic and the United States. To date, there has been no response at all to that request from the authorities of the Government of the United States. There has only been a prolonged silence, which appears suspicious.

Given that undefined situation, we join others in stating that a terrorist is not just someone who carries out terrorist acts through his own actions, but also someone who protects terrorists. Our Government hopes that the steps we have taken to obtain extradition will be duly responded to by the Government of the United States of America, in accordance with the extradition treaty in force and other applicable norms of international law.

The second case involves the Reverend Pat Robertson, who has ties at the highest level to the Republican Party, and who has publicly called for the assassination of our President Hugo Rafael Chávez Frías. Mr. Robertson has undoubtedly committed a terrorist act, according to current international law and resolution 1624 (2005) — recently adopted by the Security Council — which, in its preamble, strongly condemns incitement to commit acts of terrorism and expresses deep concern that

> "incitement of terrorist acts motivated by extremism and intolerance poses a serious and growing danger to the enjoyment of human rights, threatens the social and economic development of all States, undermines global stability and prosperity, and must be addressed urgently and proactively by the United Nations and all States".

Moreover, in paragraph 1 that resolution

> "Calls upon all States to adopt such measures as may be necessary and appropriate and in accordance with their obligations under international law to:
>
> (a) Prohibit by law incitement to commit a terrorist act or acts;
>
> (b) Prevent such conduct;
>
> (c) Deny safe haven to any persons with respect to whom there is credible and relevant information giving serious reasons for considering that they have been guilty of such conduct".

We do not understand how the Government of the United States of America can allow Mr. Robertson to continue with impunity to make absurd, insane and disrespectful comments against the President of a democratic State who has repeatedly been reaffirmed in his constitutional mandate by the Venezuelan people.

The Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has also taken steps aimed at having Mr. Robertson extradited for crimes committed against

the President of the Republic that are covered by the penal code of Venezuela and international law. Again, we hope that, after those steps have been taken, the formal request for extradition will be duly and diligently heeded by the United States authorities.

We reiterate that under international law it is prohibited to harbour known terrorists. Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), in its paragraphs 2 (c) and 3 (g), prohibits States from providing asylum to those who commit acts of terrorism, and disallows claims of political motivation as grounds for refusing requests for the extradition of terrorists.

Moving on to another matter, namely, the question of equitable representation in the Security Council and the increase in the membership and related matters, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela feels that the Security Council must enlarge its membership. However, there must also be an increase in the permanent as well as the non-permanent membership, with the inclusion of developing countries among the permanent members. That would reflect the new geopolitical realities in the world and the great need to have balance within the Security Council and within the Organization.

Moreover, Venezuela believes that the right of veto should be eliminated, so that we can move forward towards democratizing the Organization. Reform of the Council must be considered alongside other themes to be discussed in the General Assembly. Among such themes, national development is a priority matter for our country, a problem of crucial importance for the national security of our country and other countries as well.

Our delegation believes that improving the working methods of the Security Council will not provide a panacea or remedy for dealing with the objectionable activities of that body, nor will it ensure full transparency. Using the Arria formula, which has been referred to recently in this Hall, is only another way to hide or obscure the lack of transparency through a supposed consultation with representatives of civil society, where no one really knows who they are nor what interests they really represent.

To discuss working methods as a priority matter is simply a means of disregarding the main question, namely, the progressive erosion of the Council's credibility and its lack of legitimacy, as its present work shows. Thus, the great need to make that body more democratic again becomes apparent.

Finally, my Republic is not in favour of creating new United Nations bodies in which the presence and decisive pre-eminence of permanent members of the Security Council would be reaffirmed to the detriment of the rights of other Member States to participate on an equal footing in those bodies.

Sir Emyr Jones Parry (United Kingdom): May I, at the outset, express on behalf of the United Kingdom our deepest sympathy to the people and Governments of Jordan and Iraq and to the families and friends of the victims of the indiscriminate attacks, which we condemn in the strongest terms.

In his introduction of the annual report of the Security Council, Ambassador Denisov has highlighted several key achievements of the Council this year. I would like to add to those listed by him the adoption, in the margins of the United Nations summit, two important resolutions. The first of these calls on all United Nations Members to act to stop incitement to terrorism; the second provides the basis for a more comprehensive and coherent approach to the prevention of conflict, particularly in Africa.

I shall concentrate my remarks now on what more can and should be done to make the Security Council more broadly representative, efficient and transparent. The United Kingdom is an active member of the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council reform. We have long supported adding new permanent and non-permanent members, including Germany, Japan, India and Brazil as permanent members, as well as increased permanent representation for Africa.

We also want to see improvements in the Council's working methods, as recommended in the summit outcome document — that is, increased transparency and accountability. We recognize that other United Nations Members want this too, as is clear from this debate and the various contributions to it. The United Kingdom recognizes that it falls to the Security Council, as the summit agreed, to continue to adapt its own working methods, and we believe this process should indeed continue as part of our commitment to summit implementation.

So, let me set out three areas where the United Kingdom particularly wants to see continuing improvements. First of all is the issue of transparency.

The Council should involve non-members more, for example, through informal, Arria-style meetings, contacts with civil society, including during Council missions, and more dialogue with troop-contributing countries. A recent useful example, in our view, was the meeting of the Council's Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations with troop contributors to the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea, which included a substantial and thoughtful debate about the immediate and underlying issues facing that Mission today.

Secondly, there is the area of consultation. The Council should engage more in dialogue with non-Council members and other experts, both to build up greater expertise and to respond to others' concerns. Ambassador Denisov has mentioned increased dialogue between sanctions committees and interested countries. We should build on this in other areas.

Another welcome development is increased coordination with regional and subregional organizations on conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, and in the fight against terrorism. We see the Peacebuilding Commission as an opportunity to ensure that the Council gets coordinated advice, taking full account of the views of major donors, regional organizations, troop contributors and others, especially those interested in a particular country's situation. This should improve the Council's own decision-making in peacebuilding by enabling it to be informed by advice across the range of peacebuilding issues.

Thirdly, there is the matter of efficiency. The United Kingdom wants to find ways to simplify and rationalize the work of the Council, including the Council's growing number of subsidiary bodies, so it can avoid duplication and concentrate its efforts where they matter most.

We look forward, therefore, to the views of incoming Security Council members on these issues; their new ideas will be valued. Indeed, the Council owes many of its innovations, like Arria-formula meetings, to past members.

The Council has had a sad burden of responding to the continued number of terrorist attacks against Member States of the United Nations. Terrorism, therefore, remains at the centre of the Council's work. We are conscious of the summit's encouragement to the Council to consider reform in this area, too, in particular how to strengthen its monitoring and enforcement role in counter-terrorism, including by consolidating reporting requirements, while respecting the different mandates of the counter-terrorism subsidiary bodies. Recommendations were also made to improve the monitoring of the effects of sanctions and to ensure that fair and clear procedures exist for placing individuals and entities on sanctions lists and for removing them, as well as for granting humanitarian exemptions.

The Council has already begun to examine how it can respond to those and other suggestions. The United Kingdom hopes the coming year will see at least some of these proposals implemented, and the Council's working methods invigorated, in the interests of greater effectiveness and impact. We intend, therefore, to work closely with others, both Council members and non-Council members, in order to achieve this.

Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, Sir, I would like to thank the Bureau and the General Assembly members for the noble sentiments expressed to us as a result of the terrorist crimes that were committed yesterday in Amman. We will never forget how the members have stood by our side at this critical moment.

The United Nations reform process is established and continuous. This has been demonstrated through Member States' support of the conclusions of the outcome document (*resolution 60/1*) of the summit that opened the sixtieth session of the General Assembly. Today, before this General Assembly, we are trying to contribute to the implementation of the objectives of that document and to deal with one of the main issues of common interest, the working methods and machinery of the Security Council.

Despite the fact that I have already expressed Jordan's position on the question of Security Council reform, a matter without which the comprehensive reform of the United Nations cannot be completed, I would like to renew our commitment to the necessary expansion of Security Council membership in both the permanent and non-permanent categories and our support for the draft resolution that was submitted to the General Assembly last August on that reform and expansion.

However, we still believe that the said draft resolution does not comprehensively address the question of developing and strengthening the Council's working methods. Therefore, we are convinced today

that, owing to the importance of this issue, we have to deal with this question in a separate, specific and comprehensive resolution. Jordan therefore completely supports the draft resolution that has been distributed on the development of the working methods of the Security Council. We have contributed to it, and, together with Switzerland, Costa Rica, Liechtenstein and Singapore, we were among the original sponsors. We are fully convinced that the draft resolution on the development of the working methods of the Security Council represents a positive step in the right direction on the way to comprehensive reform within the framework of the United Nations.

We must contribute to improved implementation of practical and specific proposals to achieve our shared goals with respect to the need for the Security Council to consider questions in a comprehensive manner, with respect to the Council's accountability and legitimacy and with respect to the transparency of its work. All those factors contribute to strengthening the effectiveness of the Security Council. Improving the Council's working methods and mechanisms is not an end in itself but a means of contributing to the larger goal of reforming the United Nations.

Mr. Mra (Myanmar): First, I would like to convey the deepest sympathies of my delegation to the Government and the people of Jordan, as well as to the injured, in connection with the terrorist bombings in Amman. We cannot condone those heinous acts.

I express our deep appreciation to the President of the Security Council for the current month, Ambassador Andrey Denisov of the Russian Federation, for introducing the report of the Council covering the period from 1 August 2004 to 31 July 2005 (*A/60/2*). I should also like to commend the excellent work done by the President of the General Assembly at its previous session, Mr. Jean Ping, and his Vice-Chairpersons in guiding the work of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council.

The Security Council is entrusted by Member States with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and with a mandate to act on their behalf. We are of the view that, by virtue of the Article 24, paragraph 1, of the Charter, the Security Council is accountable to the General Assembly. It is thus most appropriate that Member States are given this rightful opportunity to review the work undertaken by the Council during the reporting period. This is a time for reflection on the Security Council's performance. During our debate on the interrelated reports of the Security Council and of the Open-ended Working Group (*A/59/47*), we need to examine the way the Security Council has carried out its mandate and how we can make the Council more representative. We should also look at ways and means to improve its working methods.

We had high hopes that the 2005 world summit would bring significant improvements in our approach to the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. However, we regret that no significant result was reached at the recent world summit in that important area of Security Council reform. However, at the summit, leaders agreed that the early reform of the Security Council is an essential element of our overall effort to reform the United Nations in order to make it more broadly representative, efficient and transparent and thus further enhance its effectiveness and the legitimacy and implementation of its decisions. In accordance with the commitments made by our leaders, we must continue our efforts to that end.

My delegation has stated its position on reform of the Security Council on several occasions. We share the common view that the United Nations must be reformed in order to reflect the global realities of today, the increased membership of the United Nations and the need for broader representation based on equitable distribution, mutual benefit and cooperation. If the Security Council is to be more representative of contemporary political and economic realities, it should be expanded in both the permanent and the non-permanent categories.

If agreement can be reached, expansion of the Council's membership will make it more representative. However, expansion alone may not fully ensure the Council's effectiveness or transparency. We therefore believe that Security Council reform must also place special emphasis on further improvements to the Council's working methods and decision-making process in order to make its work more transparent and more democratic, so that it can better serve the interest of the entire membership of the Organization.

My delegation therefore welcomes paragraph 154 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome (*resolution 60/1*), which recommends that the Security Council adapt its working methods so as to increase the involvement of States not members of the Council in its work, enhance its accountability to the membership and increase the transparency of its work.

In that regard, my delegation is deeply appreciative of a number of initiatives taken by the Council in recent years to promote its transparency, such as the increase in the number of public meetings, the enhancement of communication and cooperation with troop-contributing countries, the delivery of press statements by the President of the Security Council and the regular holding of joint meetings among the Presidents of the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

The Council's frequent convening of open debates is a step forward in enhancing the involvement of the larger membership, because it gives States not members of the Security Council a valuable opportunity to express their views on matters affecting them and the Organization. Such open debates would be more effective if the resolutions and decisions adopted by the Council took into account the views raised in those debates by States not members of the Council.

Because the non-permanent members of the Security Council represent their respective regional groups, they should keep their regional groups informed of developments in the Security Council. In that regard, my delegation welcomes the recent briefings given by Security Council members, in particular the briefings by Japan and the Philippines for the members of the Asian Group on the work done during their respective presidencies of the Council. Such briefings are extremely useful and valuable for States not members of the Security Council. It would be even more beneficial if Security Council members also held consultations with their respective regional groups before the Council adopted a draft resolution.

My delegation has also noted the gradual increase in both the volume and the scope of the work of the Security Council. My delegation shares the growing concern at the Security Council's gradual encroachment on the powers and the mandate of the General Assembly. Over the years, there has been a growing tendency to hold Security Council discussions on thematic issues that have traditionally been considered by other organs of the United Nations. Thematic discussions can be fruitful only when they are directly related to the Council's mandate.

More worrisome is the Security Council's tendency towards increasing involvement in work of a legislative nature, which has traditionally been under the domain of the international multilateral instruments adopted following a thorough negotiation process involving all States Members of the United Nations.

My delegation deeply appreciates the work done by the Security Council on issues that are directly related to the Council's mandate. At the same time, it is of paramount importance that members of the Council act strictly in accordance with the purposes and the principles of the Charter and that they resist any attempt to take up issues that do not pose a real threat to international or regional peace and security.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to express its hope that, under the new chairmanship, the Working Group will continue to exert efforts to achieve further progress on the outstanding issues concerning the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council.

Mr. Hannesson (Iceland): Like colleagues who have preceded me, I condemn the terrorist attacks yesterday in Amman in the strongest terms. On behalf of the Government and the people of Iceland, I convey our profound condolences to the Government and the people of Jordan and, in particular, to those who lost family members and those who were injured.

At the outset, I would like to thank the President of the Security Council for the month of November for introducing the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly (*A/60/2*). The report reflects the continued increase in the volume and the scope of the activities of the Council. I will, however, limit my short statement to the issue of reform of the Security Council.

With respect to the working methods of the Security Council, Iceland has consistently supported calls for increased transparency in the work of the Security Council. That implies more openness, proactive communication and strengthened accountability. Some substantive steps have been made in that regard, such as the growing practice of open

briefings, meetings and debates of the Security Council, which we welcome. The open debates can serve as an important tool for communication among the Security Council, the wider United Nations membership and international civil society.

Iceland agrees with the Secretary-General that effective reform of the United Nations entails reform of the Security Council. Iceland has advocated a more representative and legitimate Council that better mirrors today's geopolitical realities. We are of the view that there should be an expansion of both the permanent and the non-permanent membership of the Council. Changes are long overdue. During the general debate in September, the Foreign Minister of Iceland expressed disappointment that the Group of Four proposal for reforming the Security Council seemed not to have the support it deserved: "While not perfect, it remains the most practical basis for reforming the Council. That approach therefore continues to have Iceland's firm support" (*A/60/PV.16, p.6*).

Indeed, Iceland was one of the sponsors of that proposal, draft resolution A/59/L.64, introduced last July at the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly. In our view, that proposal continues to be pertinent and relevant. Consensus on the expansion of the Security Council is desirable, but, after more than 12 years of debate, we all know that it is not reachable. We should use the democratic decision-making power at the disposal of the General Assembly.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the establishment of Security Council Report, an independent not-for-profit organization affiliated with the Columbia University Center on International Organization, which aims to provide consistent, analytical information to the public on the activities of the Security Council. I believe that this initiative will be especially beneficial for smaller delegations.

Ms. Banks (New Zealand): First, I extend New Zealand's sincere sympathy to the people and the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan following the tragic bombings yesterday in Amman.

I would like to join others in welcoming both the report of the Security Council (*A/60/2*) and the report of the Open-ended Working Group on Council reform (*A/59/47*). As Ambassador Denisov made clear this morning, the pressures on the Council are considerable. I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the efforts of Council members in managing an ever more complex and demanding agenda.

The report of the Security Council highlights the continued increase in the volume and the scope of that agenda. That in itself makes it all the more important that we have transparency in the Council's proceedings. Given the far-reaching implications of Council decisions, the membership needs to understand what decisions are being taken in the Council and why. While there have been some improvements over the years, there are still too few practical and effective mechanisms for interacting with the Council on key issues. And even where discussions do take place, Member States often feel that their views are not taken into account.

Our challenge is to resolve those concerns in a way that allows the Council to do its work quickly and efficiently and at the same time gives Member States greater confidence in the Council's decisions.

Like others, New Zealand sees a need for some basic changes in the Council's working methods. First, while structured open debates provide a good opportunity to put views on record, we would like to see greater use made of smaller, informal meetings in which the Council and the membership can discuss particular issues. The regional meetings arranged during the negotiation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) set a good precedent, as do the regular briefings that some Council members hold for their regional groups.

We would also like to see more extensive use made of drafting groups that include Member States not currently serving on the Council. That has been done successfully on issues such as Kosovo, Timor-Leste and Afghanistan. Similarly, we ask that the Security Council's subsidiary bodies consider involving non-Council members in their work. That would have the benefit of assisting the Council with its workload as well as enhancing transparency and adding to the Council's range of expertise. We ask too that the Council be made much more responsive to the interests and the views of troop-contributing countries with respect to the establishment, conduct and review of peacekeeping operations.

On the important issue of consultation, we would request the Council to look carefully at the capacity of Member States when considering new compulsory measures. As noted this morning by Barbados, on

behalf of the Caribbean Community, while there are often compelling reasons for placing urgent and far-reaching requirements on Member States, such as the counter-terrorism measures, due attention needs to be paid to the ability of Member States to meet those requirements. In our view, the Council needs to have an open and inclusive dialogue with all Member States to ensure that the compliance burdens are realistic and manageable. We have raised that concern previously with respect to the impact of those requirements, for instance, on our Pacific neighbours. We welcome the recent focus of the Al-Qaida and Taliban sanctions Committee, the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) and the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) on providing technical assistance to developing States, and we hope that creative ways can be found to address the challenging reporting requirements involved.

We remain concerned that Council action on some issues has not been possible because of the use of a single veto or a silent veto. There were several occasions in the past year when delays or complete inaction occurred despite overwhelming international support in favour of the Council taking action. We regret the situation and once again would like to put on record our unequivocal opposition to the veto, both with respect to current permanent members of the Council and any potential future members.

As a final point on working methods, I would particularly like to welcome the draft resolution circulated informally last week by Switzerland, Costa Rica, Jordan, Singapore and Liechtenstein. The draft touches on many of the points I have made and we very much hope that it will stimulate an open and constructive discussion among the membership on strengthening the work of the Council.

Finally, a word on Security Council expansion. At the world summit, leaders supported early reform of the Security Council. They committed themselves to continuing efforts to achieve a decision on the issue. New Zealand welcomes that commitment. We are of the view that the Security Council should be more broadly representative, effective and transparent. We believe that any expansion of the Council must include Japan.

Mr. Pleuger (Germany): Let me begin by condemning in the strongest terms the heinous terrorist acts committed in Amman, and expressing our heartfelt condolences to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and to the families of the victims.

We are grateful for the President's decision to schedule this debate on Security Council reform alongside our discussions on other pressing reform topics, such as management reform, the Human Rights Council and the Peacebuilding Commission. That clearly confirms the conviction expressed by our heads of State in the outcome document, that Security Council reform is an essential part of overall reform.

The recent general debate in the General Assembly also reflected that view, as did the Secretary-General when he stated that no United Nations reform can be complete without Security Council reform. Around 140 speakers made a point of stressing the need for Council reform in that debate. Obviously, the issue is going to stay on our agenda, because the need for action is so widely recognized. We will not make the problem go away just by waiting. Action is needed, and action there will be.

The G-4 have presented a comprehensive proposal that will basically do four things. First, it will increase the legitimacy, transparency and effectiveness of the Council. Secondly, it will ensure the participation of major contributors to the maintenance of international peace and security. Thirdly, it will ensure equitable representation of developing countries and of Southern Hemisphere nations in the Council, and fourthly, it will improve the Council's working methods.

We continue to believe — and we fully share what has just been stated by the Ambassador of Iceland — that our proposal is the one that most comprehensively addresses the reform needs of the Council. Naturally, and let me stress again, we remain open to discussing amendments and other proposals that could improve our proposal in its substance and that could broaden the basis of support for reform.

There are also other proposals being discussed, such as the African Union resolution and the proposal on working methods presented by five countries. They all demonstrate the continuing interest in reform and contribute to the dynamics of the reform process. The African Union model, in fact, is very close to the G-4 proposal. In the last General Assembly, the African Union could not put its resolution to the test or consider a compromise with the G-4 because it needed more time to consolidate its position. Now, we

understand that at its summit in Addis Ababa in October, the African Union decided to take action on this issue. We welcome that decision and hope it will pave the way for a decision on Security Council reform.

Let me now turn to a question which has come up recently: should we approach Security Council reform by stages, in a piecemeal manner? Our opinion is, clearly, no. Only a reform proposal addressing all major facets will be able to deliver satisfactory results.

We want neither an enlarged Council that does not change its ways, nor recommendations for working methods reform that look good on paper but will not be implemented in a Council that remains structurally the same. For 60 years the Council has worked with provisional rules of procedure. How could we expect it to modernize its working methods now if its composition remains the same?

In order to reform the Council's working methods, we need a structural change in the balance of power of the Council. To achieve that, we need to increase the numbers of both permanent and non-permanent members. New permanent members would be bound by political commitments they have made in the process of Security Council reform. They know from their experience as non-members and as elected members of the Council what the justifiable and legitimate needs of the membership outside of the Council are — in particular, more transparency, more inclusiveness and accountability. This group, therefore, constitutes the best instrument to bring about change. That is why we think it is neither useful nor realistic to separate cluster I from cluster II issues.

It has become clear to all of us that there is no consensus on Security Council reform and that there will be none in the future. A vote therefore is unavoidable. It is obvious that all those who oppose a vote in fact want to prevent Security Council reform from happening. I would like to ask all those who warn against a vote on this crucial issue how they reconcile their stand with the clear demand in the outcome document for results in reforming the Council.

There is another contradiction. Some members of the so-called Uniting for Consensus group, who always opposed a vote, now support a draft resolution on cluster II issues and eventually intend to put that to the vote. There is evidently no more consensus on working methods than on enlargement. If a vote on one is advocated, then we feel a vote on the other should be accepted as well.

Last week, our colleague and my friend, the Ambassador of Pakistan, compared the United Nations to an old and leaky sailboat that we are trying to repair in mid-voyage. He proposed that we do what we can on necessary repairs, but not rock and capsize the boat by tackling everything at once. I think the comparison with a boat at sea is very apt, only I draw a different conclusion from the metaphor: if we find ourselves sailing in a vessel that has a number of leaks, I would advise repairing all of those and not leaving one of the biggest leaks open to take in water. I would also advise using all the tools available for repairs. The vote is an effective tool, and we should use it.

There are those who worry that an increase in the membership of the Council might diminish its effectiveness. But effectiveness is not exclusively a function of the decision-making procedure, that is, how easily the necessary majority vote is obtained for a resolution. Effectiveness is determined also by the legitimacy of a body, just as much as by the number of its members. If the membership of a body adequately reflects today's political realities, if it incorporates the perspective of all world regions and if it includes those in its decision-making who will contribute the most to the implementation of resolutions — only then will you have a body that is efficient both in taking decisions and in implementing them.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.

United Nations A/60/PV.49

General Assembly

Sixtieth session

Official Records

49th plenary meeting
Friday, 11 November 2005, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Eliasson ..... (Sweden)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Hamidon (Malaysia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda items 9 and 117 (*continued*)

Report of the Security Council (A/60/2)

Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters

Mr. Kuchinsky (Ukraine): First, I would like to express our gratitude to the President of the Security Council for the month of November, Ambassador Andrey Denisov of the Russian Federation, for his comprehensive presentation of the annual report of the Council to the General Assembly. We are encouraged by the attention paid in the presentation to the increase in the transparency of the Council's activities and in the improvement of its working methods, in particular in the triangular relationship between the Security Council, the United Nations Secretariat and troop-contributing countries.

The period under review was indeed very eventful for the United Nations and, therefore, for the Security Council, as its nerve centre. Constant threats and challenges, having no respect for the United Nations sixtieth anniversary, continued to challenge the durability of the system of international peace and security guarded by the Organization, more than ever requiring urgent and resolute action by the Security Council. How, then, did the body entrusted with the primary responsibility to keep the peace address those challenges during that period? Let me try to answer that question, which I believe is of the utmost importance for all of us.

Without any doubt, international terrorism remains one of the greatest threats to international peace and security. In that connection, I would like to add Ukraine's voice to the unanimous strong condemnation of the terrorist bombings in Amman, and to convey our deepest sympathy and condolences to the victims of those heinous attacks and their families, and to the people and the Government of Jordan.

Ukraine is convinced that the Security Council should continue to use its unique potential to mobilize the international community to fight the scourge of terrorism. We welcome the steps taken by the Security Council in that direction, in particular through its resolution 1624 (2005). The Counter-Terrorism Committee should continue to be a crucial instrument in the hands of nations to combat, and ultimately eliminate, terrorism. We believe that early adoption of a comprehensive convention to combat terrorism will greatly facilitate the Council's efforts in that crucial area.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction continues to be another issue posing a major threat to the system of collective security. The Council must continue to play its role in multilateral efforts to strengthen the non-proliferation regime. We welcome

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the progress made in the implementation of Council resolution 1540 (2004), as well as in the work of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to that resolution. At this stage it is important to provide assistance to States, including through the Committee, to ensure the proper implementation of that important resolution.

This year the Security Council has shown unity in addressing the situation in Iraq. We firmly believe that the Council's instruments are very important for normalizing the situation in that country. It is important for the Council to ensure the effective implementation of the existing timetable for a comprehensive political transition process in the country, namely, through holding free and democratic elections in December and through the formation of a permanent Government of Iraq.

The work of the Council with regard to Afghanistan should be commended. We are nevertheless convinced that the main responsibility for finding a political solution to the Afghan issue lies with the Afghan people themselves. The Council should continue to be actively involved in all clusters of the Afghan problem. There still remains a pressing need for continued international security assistance in Afghanistan.

My delegation commends the Council's efforts in the Middle East peace process. Resolution 1515 (2003) reflects the wide consensus within the international community on how best to achieve the existence of two States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security. With its endorsement of the Quartet's road map, that resolution was an important step towards the beginning of Israel's withdrawal from Gaza and from parts of the northern West Bank. We believe that successful disengagement can be the first step towards the resumption of the peace process.

We hope that the Council will urge the relevant parties to cooperate sincerely and fully with the United Nations International Independent Investigation Commission, which in accordance with Council resolutions 1595 (2005) and 1636 (2005), is assisting the Lebanese authorities in their investigation of the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri.

The unfolding status talks in the Balkans give us a hope for an early settlement of the daunting Kosovo issue. The Security Council has played its role in the commencement of that process, and I am confident in my belief that it should continue its active engagement and support at this stage and in the next and decisive phase of implementation of resolution 1244 (1999).

Ukraine welcomes the continued active engagement of the Council with regard to conflict resolution in Africa. We especially support and welcome the trend towards increased use of African-owned mechanisms in that area. Ukraine took positive note of the declaration on conflict prevention, particularly in Africa (*Security Council resolution 1625 (2005), annex*), which was adopted at the Council summit in September. The implementation of that important document will logically build upon the outcome of the 2000 Security Council summit on ensuring an effective role for the Council in the maintenance of international peace and security, particularly in Africa (*Security Council resolution 1318 (2000)*). I wish to recall once again that that was done on the initiative of my country.

We welcome the trend towards further strengthening the cooperation between the Security Council and regional organizations. There have been quite a few encouraging examples over the past decade of how United Nations peacekeeping missions can be effectively supported and complemented by United Nations-mandated operations of other organizations. The United Nations could, and should, actively use that important tool and rely increasingly on the potential of regional structures.

Let me now turn to an issue that, whatever its fundamental importance in itself, has further galvanized the international situation in the context of the September summit. I am of course referring to Security Council reform. Ukraine considers reform of the Security Council to be of exceptional international significance. Making that body more representative and balanced, and its work more effective and transparent, especially with regard to the decision-making process, is vital for adapting the United Nations to the realities of the twenty-first century. Our overall approach to the issue is based on the following pillars.

Security Council reform should be implemented in strict compliance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The enlargement of the Council should be carried out in both categories of membership, permanent and non-permanent. We

support increased representation in that body for developing countries from Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean.

Since the membership of the Group of Eastern European States has doubled over the last decade, it should have an additional non-permanent seat in the Council.

The Security Council's structural reform and the improvement of its working methods should go hand in hand. In particular, those countries that contribute the most to the Organization — militarily, diplomatically and financially — should be more involved in the Council's decision-making process.

Ukraine has consistently supported the limitation of the use of the veto by the Security Council permanent five. We believe that Council enlargement is an integral part of the comprehensive United Nations reform agenda aimed at enabling it to effectively react to the challenges and opportunities of today's world, in the security, development and human rights fields alike. That agenda encompasses such crucial elements as revitalization of the General Assembly; strengthening of the United Nations human rights mechanisms through the establishment of the Human Rights Council; reform of the Economic and Social Council; establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission; and, of course, management reform.

It is regrettable that the quantity of debates held and options proposed on Security Council reform on the eve of, and during, the September summit did not translate into quality results. Still, we hope that the momentum will be maintained and, hopefully, lead to early reform in this area — so vital to our Organization — as sought in the outcome document of the summit. Ukraine remains fully committed to that objective.

Mr. Grey-Johnson (Gambia): The report of the Security Council for the period 1 August 2004 to 31 July 2005 shows that progress has been achieved in tackling problems related to peace and security in some countries and regions of the world. It thus lays down the building blocks for concerted action aimed at achieving even more in the year ahead. My delegation would have liked to have seen a more extensive analysis of the Council's activities that could have been the basis for improvements in future.

We all were encouraged by the positive developments in the Middle East and the bold and courageous initiatives taken by both the Israeli and the Palestinian leaderships towards resolving some of the intractable problems at the root of the conflict between the two neighbours. That led us to believe that efforts in the context of the road map were, in fact, on course towards the realization of the vision of the two States living side by side in peace. Alas, the developments since have been threatening those gains and require that the Security Council once more be purposeful and innovative in ensuring that all concerned remain steadfast towards the attainment of the objectives of peace. This long-running conflict has created ripples that have caused much damage throughout the world. It is in our collective interest, therefore, that an early and durable solution be found.

Elsewhere in the Middle East, tensions are either escalating or are brewing dangerously. The situation in Iraq is not abating. On the contrary, the scale of violence appears to be increasing from day to day, with untold suffering and loss of life and limb among innocent Iraqi civilians. My delegation urges all concerned to begin considering less confrontational and militaristic approaches to the resolution of the conflict in that country. There are clear early warning signs of an impending explosion in neighbouring countries. My delegation strongly urges the Council to do everything in its power to prevent an eruption of violence in any form in the countries bordering Iraq, as such an occurrence could totally destabilize the entire region, an eventuality whose consequences would be dire for the rest of the world.

Let me take this opportunity to express to the Government and the people of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan my Government's deepest condolences in connection with the terrorist attack carried out in Amman yesterday, which caused serious casualties among innocent civilians.

Turning now to the Council's work in the African region, my delegation is heartened by the steady gains that have been made in containing or reducing the scale of conflicts on the continent. In Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea-Bissau, the Central African Republic and Burundi, the fires of war have been put out, the political transition has been completed and the countries concerned have been readied for partnership with the international community in peacebuilding and development. We commend the Council for steadfastly

pursuing the peace agenda in these countries and for the outstanding results achieved.

There is still some unfinished business in certain parts of the continent, which will hopefully be very much a part of the agenda for the future. There is still the case of the forgotten imbroglio in Somalia, whose neglect on our part may be short-sighted if not totally counterproductive. Because of the long period of statelessness and isolation it experienced, Somalia may now have become a fertile breeding ground and haven for terrorists. The frequency of piracy attacks and other acts of terrorism against cargo and passenger vessels bears testimony to this sad development. My delegation strongly urges the Council to enter into a more proactive engagement with Somalia so as to bring it back into the comity of nations.

In the period under review, the Council has significantly built upon its partnership with regional and subregional organizations in advancing the peace and security agenda in Africa. Working closely with the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States, it has been able to make significant gains in countries such as the Sudan and Guinea-Bissau. Together they have also been able to deliberate on strategies for tackling problems that drive conflicts, such as cross-border security issues. We hope that this partnership will be further refined and used to much greater effect in the search for solutions to the continent's problems of peace and security. It could also provide a good model for cooperation that can be replicated in other parts of the world.

My delegation aligns itself fully with the statement made by the Ambassador of Nigeria, speaking on behalf of the Group of African States. We fully concur that the time has indeed come for one of history's greatest injustices to be corrected and for Africa to be accorded two permanent seats in the Council, with all the rights and privileges that go with membership in that category, including the right to the veto.

My delegation also reiterates the call by the African Union for Africa to be accorded two additional non-permanent seats in the Council. As the report itself acknowledges in its introduction, "Africa figured, once again, at the forefront of the Council's agenda". Is it not right, therefore, for Africa to be at the table along with those who take decisions that affect its future? We urge all delegations to support Africa's request and the draft resolution that the African Group will eventually put up for action to give effect to it.

My delegation strongly believes that more should be done by way of an in-depth review of the working methods of the Council. Specifically, attention must be focused on the veto in all its aspects, with a view to ascertaining the degree of its usefulness vis-à-vis today's requirements for global peace and security.

We are aware that there are moves to introduce a draft resolution on the working methods of the Council — a draft resolution that is, in our view, incomplete at this stage. The draft calls for wider consultation and for a fuller assessment of the reforms realistically required to make the Council's working methods more transparent, democratic and effective. We are prepared to work with its sponsors to make it more acceptable to a larger number of delegations.

Finally, my delegation commends the outgoing members of the Council — Algeria, Benin, Brazil, the Philippines and Romania — for a very productive term of office in the Council. We express our congratulations and best wishes for an equally successful term to the incoming members — the Congo, Ghana, Peru, Qatar and Slovakia.

Mr. Desmoures (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I should like to join previous speakers in expressing my country's sincere condolences to the Government and the people of Jordan for the terrorist attacks committed last Wednesday in the city of Amman.

On various occasions, we have stated that Argentina supports a solution with regard to Security Council reform that is based on a broad consensus. In recent months, we have witnessed the negative consequences of the intention to impose a reform process through the pressure of a vote. We all saw how that created an atmosphere of division and tension, which affected the spirit of the negotiations on the reform document (*resolution 60/1*) adopted at the summit of heads of State or Government in September.

We therefore welcome the current consultations. We have a working group that could be used to follow the path of dialogue, analysis and consensus-building. We must begin a stage of deliberation and begin to analyse — jointly, calmly and in a spirit of openness and cooperation — the various options that already

exist concerning expansion and working methods. We should also consider new approaches.

We have indicated many times that the nature of the permanent membership is an inequity that must be corrected in the future. If we add new permanent members, the asymmetry that affects the legal equality of States will only further increase. That is why we continue to stress the advantages of the larger number of non-permanent seats for developing countries offered by the expansion model proposed by the Uniting for Consensus group. As affirmed by several of the group's members, the ideas of Uniting for Consensus offer the possibility of resolving in a positive manner the imbalances and asymmetries that would be caused by the potential creation of new permanent members. Such proposals — with improvements or variations and on the basis of an expanded number of elected seats — could include longer periods, renewable mandates and legitimate rotation criteria.

The Assembly should therefore give the working group a consultative aspect in order to continue to address this complex and political issue. We must continue the dialogue and build a consensus. We believe that priority must be given to the efforts being made in the ongoing negotiations on the establishment of a Human Rights Council and a Peacebuilding Commission and on administrative issues.

Mr. Pak Gil Yon (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): The Security Council and the United Nations were established with the mission of maintaining international peace and security. Regrettably, however, during the 60 years since the Organization's inception, the world has never been at peace at all. The world was unstable in the 1990s because of the cold war and it continued to be unstable after the cold war because of unforeseen territorial and ethnic disputes. It remains unstable owing to the increasingly provocative unilateralism and arbitrariness of the super-Power.

The overall situation demands that Member States review the activities of the Security Council — which is responsible for maintaining international peace and security — on the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations. They must also take adequate measures to meet the requirements of the current, changed environment.

Historically, the element of impartiality has been missing from the activities of the Security Council, which has failed to fulfil its mandate of ensuring international peace and security in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. In the southern part of the Korean Peninsula, the so-called United Nations Command, which has existed for more than half a century, is a typical product of the partiality observed in the Council's activities. As explained time and again in this forum, the United Nations Command is a de facto United States Command with United Nations helmets, which demonstrates the abuse of the United Nations name while carrying out the United States strategy aimed at the domination of Asia.

The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea believes that, in light of the lessons learned from 60 years of United Nations history and from the current situation, it is most urgent that the Security Council ensure impartiality and fairness in its activities, so that it can carry out its responsibility of maintaining international peace and security. Therefore, if there is to be genuine Council reform, measures should be taken to remove all elements of partiality from the Council's activities and to expand the Council. Establishing a mechanism for the General Assembly to endorse Security Council resolutions on the use of force would be such a measure.

With regard to expansion of the Security Council, we must ensure full representation of the Non-Aligned Movement and developing countries, which constitute the majority of the United Nations membership. We believe that that would enable us to redress the imbalance in the Council membership and would give all Member States a more equal opportunity to participate in Council activities, in keeping with the purposes of United Nations reform.

Unlike the situation with regard to non-permanent Council seats, increasing the number of permanent seats involves sensitive and intricate issues, such as the criteria for selection and eligibility for the veto power. This year's intensive discussions on various proposals — including that of the group of four countries — revealed the extreme complexity of the reform process.

It is a well-known fact that the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is opposed to Japan's efforts to become a permanent member of the Security Council because that country has not sincerely

atoned for its tremendous past crimes against humanity. Our position enjoys wide understanding and support, not only from neighbouring countries but also from a significant number of other countries from Asia and throughout the world.

The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would like to conclude its statement by expressing its strong belief that issues — including equal representation on and enlargement of the Security Council — should be resolved in the interests of developing countries.

Mr. Kirn (Slovenia): Allow me to begin by condemning the terrorist attacks that took place in Amman on Wednesday. I express the deep sympathy and condolences of my Government to the Government and the people of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on the human losses caused by those barbaric attacks.

I would like to thank Ambassador Andrey Denisov of the Russian Federation, current President of the Security Council, for his introduction of this year's report of the Council to the General Assembly (*A/60/2*). During the period under review the Council continued to be active on a wide array of country-specific, region-specific and thematic issues. As the Council's report attests, both the volume and the scope of the Council's activities continue to increase.

Let me make some brief comments on some elements of the report. Slovenia's Foreign Minister, in his capacity as Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), had the opportunity to address the Council earlier this year and to engage in substantive interaction with Council members. That discussion was also useful from the OSCE's perspective. We believe such exchanges with regional organizations are welcome and necessary, and we support further intensification of institutional relationships with regional organizations.

In addition to the practice of missions conducted by the Council, we would also like to support the holding of extraordinary meetings outside Headquarters, such as the meeting held at Nairobi last November. Such meetings held outside New York, when appropriate, bring the work of the Council closer to the peoples of affected areas under the Council's consideration.

We commend the Council for instituting commissions of inquiry, such as the one established last year for Darfur, Sudan, and the one set up this year for the investigation of the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri. Such inquiry processes help gather data and information in an impartial and expeditious manner.

We would in particular like to recognize the historic significance of resolution 1593 (2005), as well as to commend the Council for making use of the Article 13 (b) of the Rome Statute to refer the situation in Darfur since 1 July 2002 to the International Criminal Court (ICC). The ICC is now fully operational and is well equipped to deal in an impartial judicial manner with situations of gross crimes and atrocities within its mandate. The work of the ICC is, in our view, a necessary part of endeavours to maintain international peace and security, and can therefore be very complementary to the work of the Security Council.

I will not dwell on specific country or regional situations, except to briefly welcome the Council's recent decision to give the green light for the Kosovo future status process to move forward, for we believe that further stalling would not be beneficial either to the resolution of the matter and Kosovo's stabilization or for the stabilization of the wider region.

With regard to thematic issues, we would like in particular to commend the Council for its innovative approaches, including its drawing up of lists of State and non-State violators in connection with the subject of children and armed conflict. We hope that the monitoring and reporting mechanism that has been agreed will soon begin its work. The Council should also be commended for the recently commemorated fifth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security. Those and other thematic deliberations make an important contribution to the protection of civilians and enhance the human security of vulnerable individuals in dire situations.

Let me now make some comments regarding the outcome document (*resolution 60/1*) of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly, which was adopted by our leaders in September, as it relates to the work of the Council.

First, Slovenia welcomes the outcome document's affirmation of the responsibility to protect. We understand this as a conceptual breakthrough towards better prevention of future tragedies of the kind that occurred in Srebrenica, Rwanda and Darfur. It

entails our national and collective responsibility to act in cases of genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes and crimes against humanity. That responsibility is an integral part of a nation's sovereignty as it relates to the protection of its people against such atrocities. But we also understand that responsibility as an onus on the Security Council to act, when need be, in the exercise of its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. We further consider the use of the veto in connection with the atrocities I have mentioned to be fundamentally incompatible with the very idea of the responsibility to protect.

While we fully support the provisions in the summit outcome document regarding the use of force under the Charter of the United Nations, we must also state that we would have wished for more ambitions provisions in the document regarding the principles for the use of force, as had previously been suggested by the Secretary-General in his report issued last March entitled "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" (A/59/2005). We hope that further work can be done in that regard at an appropriate opportunity. We believe that better-defined guidelines for the use of force by the Council would contribute both to predictability of action and to the Council's credibility.

We would like to call upon the Council to continue to engage in dialogue with the other relevant parts of the United Nations system — for example, through briefings provided by the High Commissioner for Human Rights. We would also invite the Council to contribute to, and support, the United Nations in establishing an early warning capability, in accordance with paragraph 138 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome. We also encourage the Council to make full use of the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide, to benefit from his briefings and to follow up on his recommendations for the prevention of future genocide.

Finally, I cannot but reiterate Slovenia's position reflecting our commitment to comprehensive Security Council reform. We continue to believe that the increasing volume and scope of the Council's activities prompt us to recognize the need to adapt the Security Council's membership in both its permanent and non-permanent categories, as well at its methods of work, including the right to the veto, in order that the Council may efficiently address the geopolitical realities of today's world.

As we have continuously advocated for the past year, the Eastern European region should not be left out when the number of non-permanent seats are increased. Slovenia will therefore continue to support efforts to enlarge the Council in both its permanent and non-permanent categories of membership.

We also believe that the time has now come to increase the transparency and accessibility of the Council vis-à-vis the wider membership of the Organization. We therefore support the calls from the wider membership for more transparent and efficient working methods. We believe that improved working methods are necessary to better enable the Organization, including the Security Council, to collectively address today's threats and challenges in a globalized world. Greater openness to general views in the Council's decision-making process, and in particular when it results in semi-legislative decisions under Chapter VII of the Charter, will, in our view, increase both the effectiveness and the legitimacy of the Council.

Slovenia supports progress in both aspects of Security Council reform: enlargement and working methods. For the reasons I have mentioned, Slovenia supports the initiative announced by Costa Rica, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Singapore and Switzerland with regard to a draft resolution on the working methods of the Security Council.

We welcome the initiative both we have not been able to move forward within the Open-ended Working Group and on the basis of the world summit outcome document (*resolution 60/1*), in particular its paragraph 154. But, most important, we believe, in fact, that the proposals contained in this initiative are long overdue. We believe it is appropriate for the General Assembly, based, inter alia, on Article 10 of the Charter, to engage in a meaningful dialogue with the Security Council on working methods to bring about greater transparency, representativity, efficiency, effectiveness, legitimacy and implementation of the Council's decisions.

Mr. Dapkiunas (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): Let me thank Ambassador Denisov for introducing the annual report on the work of the Security Council (*A/60/2*). The delegation of Belarus commends the Council for its work during the reporting period to maintain peace and security in various regions of the world, particularly in Africa.

The recent tragic events in Jordan demonstrate the importance of the Council's work in combating terrorism and other global threats. Today, we convey our sincere condolences to the people and the Government of Jordan on the large loss of life caused by those terrorist acts.

Belarus commends Member States for their efforts in the run-up to the United Nations summit to advance the issue of Security Council reform. Those efforts significantly reinvigorated the discussion on the issue of Council expansion. We are sincerely grateful to the group of four countries — Brazil, Germany, India and Japan — to the African Union (AU) and to the Uniting for Consensus group, for their important contributions to the discussion on ways to enlarge the Security Council. Belarus itself has tried to contribute to the process of Council reform, particularly by presenting its own model of expansion of the membership.

At all phases of the discussion of approaches to United Nations reform, Belarus has advocated enlargement of the Security Council in order to harmonize its membership with today's international political realities, to ensure adequate geographical representation in the Council and to democratize that important United Nations organ.

We fully recognize the importance of achieving the broadest possible consent and compromise among Members on key aspects of Council reform, including options both for enlargement of its membership and for the improvement of its working methods. We are certain that only by duly taking into account the views of all Member States will reform of the Security Council enhance the effectiveness of the work of that United Nations body and build the international community's trust in it.

Key elements of the position of Belarus on this issue continue to be expansion of representation of developing countries in the Council, as well as the granting of one additional non-permanent seat to the Eastern European regional group. Unfortunately, active discussion on the issue of Council reform during the run-up to the summit focused essentially on ways to expand the membership; the issue of improving the Council's working methods and procedures was not given due attention. We believe that enhancing the effectiveness of the activities of the Council depends equally on the enlargement of the membership and on improvement of its working methods. This is precisely why we welcome the draft resolution on the working methods of the Security Council that has been prepared by Costa Rica, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Singapore and Switzerland. It contains a number of important elements that can improve the Security Council's interaction with the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and all States Members of the Organization. It would also create an environment for rapid and effective implementation of Council decisions. Belarus stands ready to take part in discussions on that important and highly promising document.

Mr. Kapoma (Zambia): Let me begin by conveying the condolences of my Government to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, to its Government, to the families of those who lost their lives and to those who sustained injuries in the terrorist acts that befell that country two days ago.

My delegation would like to associate itself with the statement made by the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the African Union (AU).

The Security Council is the only principal organ of the United Nations that has an overriding mandate and whose decisions and resolutions are binding on all Member States. It is an organ that is entrusted with the responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and is also the only organ some of whose members possess special privileges. It is that special mandate that necessitates reform of the Council so as to make it transparent, democratic and accountable to the general membership of the United Nations.

Reform of the Security Council, as is well known, has been on the agenda of the General Assembly for over a decade; in its resolution 48/26 of 3 December 1993, the Assembly decided to establish an Open-ended Working Group to consider all aspects of the question of increase in the membership of the Security Council and its working methods and other matters related to it. Since the Working Group began its deliberations in January 1994, little if any progress has been made. Hence the current debate aimed at making the Council more responsive to today's realities in world affairs.

At the fifty-ninth session, the General Assembly, pursuant to the Secretary-General's report entitled "In larger freedom: towards development, security and

human rights for all", (*A/59/2005*) which was a result of the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (*A/59/565*), deliberated in depth on the recommendation contained in those two documents relating to reform of the Security Council. Regrettably, it failed to reach agreement on the enlargement of the Council, especially on an increase in the permanent-member category.

The three draft resolutions that were submitted to the General Assembly — by the group of four countries, the African Union and the Uniting for Consensus group, respectively — prior to the summit in September did not receive the required consensus support and, as a result, the issue was referred to the sixtieth session. The September 2005 summit outcome document (*resolution 60/1*) urged the sixtieth session of the General Assembly to review progress on reform by the end of this year. It is therefore incumbent upon the Assembly to implement what was mandated by our heads of State and Government, as set out in the outcome document.

Africa, through the African Union, has its own position on the reform of the Security Council which is well known by all the States Members of the United Nations. The African Union draft resolution (*A/59/L.67*) was submitted to this General Assembly in July and seeks the following: not less than two permanent seats for Africa, with all the prerogatives and privileges of permanent membership, including the right of veto; five non-permanent seats for Africa; and improved Council working methods.

In an effort to break the current impasse, Africa will continue to hold consultations with all interested groups, regions and individual Member States, with a view to finding a solution satisfactory to all.

Africa's position is a principled one, in that Africa is the only continent without a permanent seat on the Security Council. We see no moral justification for the perpetuation of this historical injustice. In our desire to have at least two permanent seats, we do not subscribe to the notion of having two categories of permanent members, one category with veto powers and the other with none, as that state of affairs, in our view, would not add value to the status quo as far as Africa is concerned. It is with this in mind that Africa is urging other Member States to support Africa's position and, subsequently, its draft resolution.

At this session, the Assembly has a unique opportunity to contribute to the reform of the Security Council in order to make it more democratic, accountable, efficient and transparent, so that it can be relevant to today's world, as opposed to that of 1945. My delegation therefore wishes to appeal to all Member States to engage in serious consultations in order to ensure that at the end of the day we will have a Security Council that will be not only representative but also, in all its actions and decisions, accountable to the totality of the United Nations. Reform will have to involve both enlargement in the permanent and non-permanent categories and working methods. My delegation regards enlargement of the Security Council and reform of its working methods as two sides of the same coin; therefore, they should be addressed as such.

Let us seize this occasion and carry out the mandate entrusted to us by our leaders, as expressed in the September 2005 outcome document, in the interest of the well-being of the United Nations.

Nana Effah-Apenteng (Ghana): At the outset, allow me to express my delegation's appreciation to Ambassador Andrey Denisov, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation and President of the Security Council for this month, for his introduction of the annual report of the Security Council covering the period 1 August 2004 to 31 July 2005 (*A/60/2*).

But before proceeding any further, my delegation would like to express its condolences to the Government and the people of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on the terrorist attacks in Amman last Wednesday. Our sympathies go in particular to those whose family members or friends lost their lives or were injured in the bomb attacks.

The report of the Security Council clearly conveys a picture of the busy schedule that has characterized its work during the period under review. My delegation would like to express its appreciation for the Council's comprehensive approach to dealing with the maintenance of international peace and security, in the light of the growing volume and complexity of conflict situations spanning the various regions of the world. I must also remark on the early issuance of the Council's report, which is an improvement on last year, and on the fact that the two agenda items currently under consideration have been rightly reorganized into a joint debate format.

The Council's continued dedication of a majority of its agenda to the several conflict situations on the African continent is worthy of mention. It is our hope that the devotion of such time and effort will be translated into needed solutions, with appropriate political support and resources.

In that regard, my delegation urges the Council to continue to explore and build on the United Nations institutional relationship with the African Union (AU), especially within the framework of the expanded mandate and new organs of the AU, such as the Peace and Security Council. We cannot but commend the Council for holding a special series of meetings in Nairobi, in November 2004. That initiative displayed a unique hands-on approach by the Council in dealing with conflict situations and fostering closer relations with regional organizations, and it is worthy of appropriate replication.

We should also like to urge the deepening of the relationship between the Council and regional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), in order to identify ways in which such vital partnerships could contribute to preventing, combating and eradicating the scourge of conflicts that have come to characterize our region. Given the improvements in the security situations in Sierra Leone and Liberia, we would like to encourage the Council to remain fully engaged in finding a lasting solution to the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire, which has in recent times seen escalating tensions that could potentially result in a relapse into full-blown conflict, reversing the hard-won gains made in the region.

While we welcome the increased consultations between the Council and the wider membership of the United Nations, it is my delegation's considered view that such interaction could be improved upon, both in terms of frequency and in terms of reflecting the views of non-member States in the decisions of the Council. Similarly, we commend the activities of the consultative mechanism to further improve cooperation between the Council and troop-contributing countries, especially the growing regularity and frequency of meetings with those countries. My delegation believes that this consultative mechanism has inherent benefits to all the parties involved in peacekeeping.

On the reform of the Security Council, my delegation reaffirms its commitment to the African position in all its aspects, as eloquently articulated at the 47th plenary meeting by my Nigerian colleague on behalf of the African Group. Let me stress the need to rectify the existing historical injustice against Africa reflected in the Council's present structure and composition. We would like to caution against the real danger of adopting half-baked solutions, where the legitimate demands of some are short-changed in a bid to arrive at any form of agreement. Therefore, we do not favour procedural tactics essentially aimed at blocking any serious attempt at comprehensive reform of the Security Council.

As recently reaffirmed at the Extraordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, held in Addis Ababa on 31 October 2005, Africa is demanding not less than two permanent seats, with all the existing prerogatives and privileges of such membership, as well as two additional non-permanent seats. Any Security Council reform package that seeks to exclude any of the elements of the principles of democracy, sovereign equality of States and equitable geographical representation would not be tenable.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to stress that the United Nations has been hard-pressed in recent times to reassert its indisputable relevance in the present global context. These have indeed been very challenging times for our Organization. However, by the same token, the United Nations has been presented with unprecedented opportunities to make relevant changes to enable it to play the role envisaged for it by the founding fathers and by humankind. Improvement in the working methods of the Security Council and necessary changes in its structure and composition remain central components of the strenuous efforts being made to reform the United Nations as a whole.

The process of Security Council reform has been long and arduous, spanning some 12-plus years. This cannot continue ad infinitum. The challenge is to heed the call of our leaders at the 2005 world summit to take a decision on this matter by the end of the year.

Mr. Beck (Palau): On behalf of the Government and the people of Palau, I wish to express our deepest condolences to the Government and the people of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on the tragic loss of lives in the terrorist attacks in Amman.

We wish to thank Ambassador Denisov of the Russian Federation for his presentation of the report of the Security Council (*A/60/2*).

When our leaders met for the momentous summit in September, they agreed that early reform of the Security Council was an essential element of our overall effort to reform the United Nations in order to make it more broadly representative, efficient and transparent. Palau's views on the best means to accomplish those objectives were expressed during the General Assembly fifty-ninth session, when we co-sponsored draft resolution A/59/L.64, which came to be known as the G-4 draft resolution. We believed then, and believe now, that it expressed an appropriate way forward on Security Council reform.

It is Palau's belief that more equitable geographical representation in the Security Council on a permanent basis is simply better, and not worse. The geographical distribution that concerns Palau the most pertains to the Pacific, which we submit is underrepresented in the organs, tribunals and bodies of the United Nations and which is often marginalized by the remoteness and isolation of its small island States.

As a Pacific State, Palau wishes acknowledges Japan's position as a regional partner with extensive knowledge of the unique cultures and vulnerabilities of its small neighbours in the Pacific. Japan has demonstrated the determination not only to understand but to help, when help is required, in those island nations. Japan's knowledge of the region should become a permanent part of the collective wisdom of the Security Council. The expansion of the Council to include other deserving countries referred to in the G-4 draft resolution will, in similar fashion, enable the Security Council to deal more effectively with a very changed world. We wish for momentum on that issue.

Palau notes with approval and admiration the excellent work of the delegations of Costa Rica, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Singapore and Switzerland. We fully endorse their notion that the working methods of the Security Council should be consistently adapted so as to increase the involvement of States that are not members of the Council. Now that Palau has deployed peacekeepers for the first time in its short history, that connectivity becomes all the more relevant. We submit that one inevitable result of the expansion of the Council along the lines proposed by the G-4 draft resolution would be a greater opportunity for enhanced involvement and understanding of the Security Council's work, particularly in currently underrepresented regions like the Pacific.

Mr. Rock (Canada): Canada is grateful for this opportunity to offer its views on the report of the Security Council, as well as to return to the important subject of Security Council reform.

I have had the opportunity in the recent past to place on record Canada's strong support for the enlargement of the Security Council. While we oppose adding permanent members, for reasons that I set forth in some detail from this podium, Canada believes that the Council's legitimacy would be enhanced by increasing its membership to include a broader representation of the world's regions. It is especially important that we redress the absence of adequate African representation. We support enlargement to produce a representative Council, but enlargement achieved in a way that is compatible with the principles of democracy, fairness, flexibility and accountability.

However, the legitimacy of the Council depends not only upon the breadth of its composition; it derives as well from its effectiveness and the way it carries out its functions. Canada believes that the effectiveness and legitimacy of the Council could be greatly enhanced if the Council made certain changes in the approach to its work. We believe that there are three areas in particular where change is desirable.

First, the Council's working methods should be improved to increase transparency and evidence-based decision-making, as well as to limit the use of the veto.

Secondly, the Council's normative framework should be updated, so that it is better equipped to meet the demands of an evolving security environment and the changes in the nature of contemporary armed conflicts.

Thirdly, the Council should manage its agenda in such a way that it gives prompt attention to those conflicts that involve grave humanitarian needs or risks to regional peace and security.

Let me first deal with working methods.

There is no doubt that, in recent years, the Council's procedures have evolved to become more open than they were. Those changes have been most welcome. But Canada believes that the time has come to go further. The first step should be to increase transparency. In an age when the Council's work, as demonstrated in the report itself, has such far-reaching and fast-growing implications for us all in expanding areas such as counter-terrorism and non-proliferation,

surely outreach and consultation with Member States is more important than ever. We urge the Council to make more frequent and systematic use of informal exchanges, and to increase the regularity of substantive briefings for Member States. Where States face challenges in their capacity to meet Council obligations, such as in the area of counter-terrorism, we encourage the provision of greater assistance.

Furthermore, there is a need for better information to assist the Council in making its important decisions. My delegation strongly supports efforts to provide better aggregate dates to the Council — for example, on trends in global conflict, about which there is much recent and important learning — in order to permit more evidence-based decision-making by the Council, where the stakes are so high.

Let me briefly deal with the matter of the veto.

We all know the inhibiting effect that the veto, or even the threat of its use, can have on Council deliberations. Indeed, there have been several regrettable occasions during the past year when the spectre of the veto had the effect of dampening debate or delaying important decisions. In our view, the veto can rarely be justified. It was originally intended to protect direct and vital great-Power interests, not as a tool for disciplining the rest of the membership on the Council or aborting debate on certain issues. For that reason, Canada believes that any use of the veto should be explained and publicly justified. We also strongly support proposals for voluntary restrictions on its use, in particularly in situations of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

Canada believes that those and other changes to the Council's working methods could very much enhance its legitimacy and effectiveness. We encourage the Council to consider adopting such measures in the months ahead. In the meantime, let me restate my Government's strong support for the General Assembly draft resolution on the Council's working methods, which has been circulated by Costa Rica, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Singapore and Switzerland. We believe that the draft resolution merits serious consideration by members of the Assembly and the Security Council alike. We encourage the drafters to initiate broad-based consultations as soon as possible.

The second area where Canada believes there should be early consideration within the Council Chamber of change is the normative framework within which the Council makes decisions on individual conflicts. In keeping with the endorsement by our leaders of the responsibility to protect, we believe that it would be timely and useful for the Council to echo those principles, so that when such crises arise we do not revisit lengthy and sterile debates about sovereignty at the risk of losing civilian lives.

We are, of course, respectful of the sincere concerns that have been raised regarding the potential for the principle of the responsibility to protect to be misused or abused. While we believe that the leaders' language renders that risk remote, there is scope for a Council resolution that could provide additional reassurance by outlining guidelines on the use of force.

The Secretary-General has proposed a pragmatic and balanced set of principles for addressing the use of force. We urge members of the Security Council to adopt a resolution that sets out those principles and expresses its intention to treat them as a guide in its future decision-making. That would not only reassure those who remain anxious about the scope of the responsibility to protect, but would also serve to strengthen the Council's legitimacy, effectiveness and transparency. We do not believe that, as some suggest, such a step would hamstring the Council by imposing rigid guidelines.

Finally, it goes without saying that the Council cannot be effective if it does not consider the full range of "live" crises. In this regard, as a compelling example of a place where the Council's attention is badly needed, we draw its attention once again to the 20-year-old conflict in northern Uganda, which we believe should be placed formally on the Council's agenda. The humanitarian crisis in northern Uganda is one of the world's worst, with 1.6 million people internally displaced and living, some for 10 years, in squalid, insecure camps, with acts of brutality — killing and maiming — committed against the local populations, and with tens of thousands of children abducted by the Lord's Resistance Army to serve as child soldiers or as sex slaves.

What is more, the presence of the Lord's Resistance Army in the Sudan and, more recently, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, illustrates the potential for that conflict to destabilize and impede peaceful transitions in the entire region. The recent increase in acts of violence against humanitarian aid

workers in northern Uganda and neighbouring southern Sudan puts at risk much-needed humanitarian operations in the region and further highlights the need for all parties to engage further on this issue. We urge the Council to place the issue of northern Uganda on its agenda, to help find ways of ensuring that Uganda meets its own responsibility to protect its own populations, to consider how the international community might support efforts to reach a political solution to that devastating conflict and others like it and, above all, to improve the dire humanitarian situation on the ground.

In conclusion, as we move forward with summit implementation, Canada agrees that we cannot afford to forget about Council reform in relation to both enlargement and effectiveness. At the same time, Council reform is but one element of the much broader agenda of renewal upon which we are now embarked. We spent significant time and energy on the composition issue in the months leading up to the summit, and we were right to do so. At this time, surely our collective priority has to be the implementation of the full range of decisions taken by our leaders in September: to establish a Peacebuilding Commission and a Human Rights Council, to initiate and follow through on management reform and to advance implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, to name but a few.

(*spoke in French*)

Notwithstanding the daunting nature of that work plan, we believe that early action with regard to the Council's working methods, norms and agenda could yield concrete success in the near term. Such action would not only be desirable in itself but would also be a means of building new momentum in our efforts to resolve the composition question.

In all of those areas we must be guided by the principles of representativeness, transparency and effectiveness. I look forward to working with colleagues on these important issues in the months ahead.

Mr. Muñoz (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to express my appreciation for the report of the Security Council (*A/60/2*), introduced by the representative of the Russian Federation, on its activities during the period 1 August 2004 to 31 July 2005, the contents of which we have taken due note.

Throughout the ongoing United Nations reform process, Chile has reiterated its view that efforts to achieve comprehensive reform must be faithful to the principles and values of the Charter, enhance the credibility and legitimacy of the Organization and bring it up to date. They must be based on the understanding that development, international security, democracy and human rights are indissociable and interdependent concepts.

From that perspective, we have actively advocated the reform of the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Commission on Human Rights and the Secretariat, as well as providing support for the necessary consensus for the establishment of the Human Rights Council and the Peacebuilding Commission. The promotion of development, as well as the concepts of the responsibility to protect and human security, are also key elements for my country.

Once again, we reaffirm that Chile seeks the renewal of the Security Council so as to make it more representative, transparent and effective. An increase in its membership, especially through the participation of more countries from the developing world, would help to achieve that objective. But that should be undertaken in parallel with the improvement of the Council's working methods.

We reaffirm the recommendation contained in paragraph 154 of the recent summit outcome document (*resolution 60/1*) that

> "the Security Council continue to adapt its working methods so as to increase the involvement of States not members of the Council in its work, as appropriate, enhance its accountability to the membership and increase the transparency of its work".

In this context, we note with interest the initiatives that have rightly been put forward to improve the Council's working methods.

At the bilateral level, Chile supports Brazil, Germany, India and Japan in their aspiration to permanent Council membership, while maintaining our long-standing position opposing the veto. Let us be very clear: Chile supports the inclusion of new permanent members, but without the right of veto, either now or later. Our consistent opposition to the veto is not recent; it was stated for the first time at the

San Francisco Conference in 1945. We recognize that the complete elimination of the right of veto is perhaps a bit unrealistic or unlikely, but we do not reject giving serious consideration to interim formulas, such as, for example, restricting its exercise only to matters under Chapter VII, excluding cases of genocide or crimes against humanity.

We also wish to state for the record that the position of Latin America and the Caribbean with regard to the enlargement of the Security Council should not disparaged in favour of that of other regions, particularly given the quantitative and qualitative contributions that have been referred to by the Secretary-General since the beginning.

By virtue of the mandate contained in paragraph 153 of the Summit Outcome of the 2005 High-level Plenary Meeting, Chile is prepared, at this stage in the reform, to contribute to the building of the consensus required for comprehensive and successful reform of the Organization, and specifically that of the Security Council, whose reform cannot continue to be delayed. Chile favours an effort aimed at achieving compromise and agreement, which has been our longstanding policy with respect to issues that divide us. We have been doing so in the Assembly and in the group of friends of the reform. The President can therefore count on our cooperation and support on this issue that we consider to be crucial.

Mr. Kazykhanov (Kazakhstan): On behalf of the Government of Kazakhstan, I would like to express my sincere condolences to the Government and people of Jordan for the tragic loss of life that resulted from the heinous terrorist attacks in Amman on 9 November.

At the outset, let me thank the Security Council and the Secretariat for the comprehensive report on the work of the Security Council during the past year, and in particular Ambassador Andrey Denisov, the current President of the Council, for his clear and informative introduction of the report.

The document before us covers a busy, and in many ways difficult, period. A number of crises that have been on the Security Council's agenda for a long time have continued to require its attention. The Security Council, as the United Nations body entrusted with primary responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security, plays a key role in current affairs affecting the international community as a whole.

Although more needs to be done, we are happy to acknowledge that progress has been made in recent years towards improving the working methods of the Security Council. My delegation welcomes the emerging practice of sending Security Council missions to the field and is particularly pleased with the Council's continuing efforts to address ongoing conflicts.

We have taken note of — and welcome — the fact that the Security Council has shifted its debate from issues of peace and security to a much boarder concept of security, while attaching importance to the rule of law, the role of regional organizations, civil society, economic and social factors and HIV/AIDS.

Although the report of the Council opens with an analytical segment, we had expected more substantive information rather than a historical recounting of the events as they happened in the Council during the year. In our opinion, the report should not be confined to what the Council has achieved, but, more importantly, it should also address what has worked and why it has worked. The report needs to be a document more useful to Member States. Non-members of the Security Council have the right to be well briefed about the work of the Council, and their views should be reflected in the report during the drafting exercise.

Openness and effectiveness should be interrelated objectives of the Security Council. The Council must do more towards increasing the participation of non-members of the Council in its deliberations. In that context, we would like to emphasize the importance of giving the wider membership an opportunity to express their views on issues before the Council, with the expectation that the Council will take those views into account before it takes its decisions.

We also believe that a satisfactory relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council should be fundamental. Dialogue between those two principal organs should not be merely ritualistic.

My delegation commends the practice of holding informal briefings on the work of the Security Council for regional groups by members of the Council. Such briefings could assist the Council in producing more balanced and impartial decisions.

Reform of the Security Council is necessary, and a decision on that subject is a serious and important

measure. Kazakhstan has repeatedly voiced its continued support for an expansion of the Security Council in both the permanent and the non-permanent categories of membership. Kazakhstan believes that, in its current form, the Council no longer reflects the realities of our world. We believe that the equitable representation of Member States in the Council could strengthen its ability to effectively face the challenges of the twenty-first century and play its role in the settlement of crisis situations.

Such a sensitive issue as the reform of the Security Council should be resolved on the basis of broad international agreement, in accordance with the principle of equitable geographical representation and with due consideration of the contribution of States concerned towards the development of the global economy and regional and global security.

We also believe that reform must also deal with the Council's working methods, which must be improved in order to enhance its transparency and accountability. We therefore support the initiatives aimed at improving the Council's working methods.

In conclusion, I would like to express the appreciation of my Government to the members of the Council for their contributions, as well as to congratulate the five newly elected members. We pledge our cooperation and full support.

We look forward to working closely with the Security Council and to participating actively in all its efforts to meet the global need for peace.

Mr. Sardenberg (Brazil): At the outset, on behalf of Brazil, I wish to express our heartfelt condolences to the people and to the Government of Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, who were victimized by the recent dastardly and abhorrent act of terrorism. We must continue to combat that scourge through all means.

I would like to thank the President of the Assembly for convening this meeting. Its timeliness is due not only to the importance of the issues themselves, but also to the need for the General Assembly to comply with the relevant provisions of the Outcome of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly as regards the question of the expansion of the Security Council. We are confident that, under the President's determined guidance, the long-standing issue of Security Council reform will be resolved, along with the other important issues relating to the institutional reform of the Organization.

I am pleased to join previous speakers in thanking Ambassador Andrey Denisov, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation and President of the Security Council for this month, for presenting the Council's report to the General Assembly. I also wish to congratulate Ambassador Adamantios Vassilakis of Greece and his team for their important work in facilitating the preparation of the document.

On behalf of our delegation, I also convey our deep appreciation and gratitude to the Security Council secretariat for their support throughout the period since January 2004, during which time Brazil has been a non-permanent member of the Council.

The report of the Security Council is an item of singular importance on the agenda of the current session of the General Assembly. As a long-standing advocate of greater accountability by the Council, Brazil more than welcomes this debate, which, to our regret, takes place only once each session. We are of the view that the notion of special reports — as set out in Article 15, paragraph 1, of the Charter, as well as in Article 24, paragraph 3 — should be heeded, especially at this stage when important reforms are under discussion at the United Nations.

Bearing this need in mind, on the occasion of its Security Council presidency last March, the Brazilian delegation, with the support of other members, reinstated the format of Security Council monthly "wrap-up" sessions. Our intention was to enable the broader membership to comment on and assess the work of the Council during that month, when a number of issues related to Africa were under review. We encourage other members to continue to promote this sort of inclusive dialogue.

The work undertaken by the Council between August 2004 and July 2005 reinforces the perception that it faces a transitional moment requiring its adaptation to new international circumstances. Growing complexity in the Council's daily work stems from the fact that current challenges exceed by far the classic pattern of inter-State conflict; to a greater extent, we are confronted with situations of domestic struggle, on the one hand, and of ever more disquieting transnational threats, on the other. The need to respond to these challenges in effective and innovative ways must be addressed in tandem with the absolute

imperative of safeguarding the framework provided by the Charter of the United Nations.

Sixty years after the creation of the United Nations, its purposes and principles are more valid than ever. Respect for the principles of sovereign equality, political independence and self-determination of peoples is essential for the achievement of peace and harmony in international life. The Council has special responsibilities in this regard and is expected to make judicious use of the powers at its disposal.

The report reflects the variety of issues that nowadays call for the involvement of the Council, such as national reconciliation, conflict prevention, activities to disarm, demobilize and reintegrate ex-combatants, post-conflict peacebuilding, promotion of justice and the rule of law, economic reconstruction, measures aimed at combating terrorism, and the threat posed by non-State actors having access to weapons of mass destruction, among many other issues.

In the Council's consideration of these measures, the Brazilian delegation ascribes priority to full consideration, on a case-by-case basis, of all elements relating to every particular situation on the ground, especially including the root causes of conflict, most of them being of a social or economic dimension. It is our view that peoples' frustration and humiliation set the stage for violence, crises and conflicts of all sorts, and that specific, precise responses can be identified to tackle these challenges in a sustainable manner.

For instance, we believe Haiti constitutes a test case for the United Nations, as it illustrates the types of problems that the United Nations is likely to face in the years ahead. These include problems deeply rooted in socio-economic shortfalls for which solutions need to be achieved by means other than military action. They require making progress, in parallel, in the fields of security, institution-building, political reconciliation, promotion of social and economic development and, certainly, the observance of human rights. Last March, I had the privilege and the honour of leading the Security Council mission to that country, in conjunction with the mission of the Economic and Social Council's Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti. I am pleased that today the Council is convinced that pervasive poverty is truly a main root cause of unrest in Haiti.

In the case of Guinea-Bissau, there is an ongoing need for promoting peace, stability and reconciliation and for continued international support. The Council will now have to consider adequate solutions as regards the future United Nations presence in that country. We fully support the ideas proposed by the Secretary-General with a view to adopting a mandate for the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau that merges the peace and security and sustainable development agendas.

As regards the situation in Timor-Leste, that country is now calm and stable — I should say to our great satisfaction. The structure and capabilities of its national institutions are being strengthened with a major contribution by the United Nations and other international support.

The three cases I have just highlighted are clear examples of the multidisciplinary approach that is required nowadays. Besides financial and material contributions, Brazil has assisted with a number of proposals and ideas in the context of the Security Council's decision-making process. We will continue to offer our support and advice.

As a Member State that has consistently called for greater, more frequent and fluid interaction between the Council and other United Nations main organs, we assessed with particular satisfaction the establishment of a Peacebuilding Commission. We look forward to the next report of the Council, to be submitted at the sixty-first session of the General Assembly, which we hope will testify to the Peacebuilding Commission, the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council itself working hand in hand to ensure conditions not only for transition from war to peace, but also from peace to stability and sustainable development.

The issue of Security Council reform has been on the agenda of the General Assembly for a very long time. There is now a clear, generalized perception that the structure of the Council fails to reflect current international realities. The urgency of the matter is shown not only by the rather obvious fact that the world of 2005 is not that of 1945, but also by the trend towards greater exercise of the Council's authority and influence in many areas, with direct domestic consequences for all countries of the world. Most, if not all, nations now realize the implications of this trend. The Council and the decisions it takes need to become more legitimate and more effective; therefore balanced representation in the Council is essential. That can be accomplished only by expanding the

permanent and non-permanent categories, with the inclusion of developing countries in both categories.

At the last session of the General Assembly, and after a long, inclusive process of consultations involving the entire membership, I introduced, on behalf of 32 sponsors, including Brazil's G-4 partners — Germany, India and Japan — the first draft resolution presented to the Assembly containing a proposed framework for a comprehensive reform of the Security Council. Another important group of countries, the African Union, put forward a proposal containing very similar ideas on the basic need to expand the permanent and non-permanent categories of Council membership.

Those proposals, which address the heart of the issue, constitute a significant development. They not only demonstrate a willingness and a determination to come to grips with the question of expansion but also demonstrate that the question can no longer be put off. Even the handful of countries bent on stalling the process felt compelled to present a proposal, although it was incompatible with the call for consensus that they so vocally maintain.

Although we would have preferred to resolve the issue before the September summit, as recommended by the Secretary-General, it would plainly be wrong to mistake the lack of a decision for a lack of progress. There is now a nearly unanimous perception among Member States that there is a pressing need for change, and a clear majority share coinciding views on the composition of a reformed Council. It is no exaggeration to say that we have never come as close to settling this protracted issue as we are right now.

Important recent developments can help move the process forward. The decision taken at the latest African Union summit, held in Sirte on 31 October, to resubmit the African proposal for Security Council reform to the General Assembly is the most recent among them. Brazil stands ready to support proposals that have fundamental elements in common with that put forward by the group of four and other countries.

We are convinced that reform on the basis of the African Union proposal would considerably improve on the current structure of the Council and would reduce the imbalance of its composition. We stand ready to work with African partners to bring about reform that corrects the historical imbalance in the Council's composition, which today excludes entire regions of the developing world from the category of permanent members.

Another important development is the circulation by Costa Rica, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Singapore and Switzerland of a proposal on the working methods of the Security Council. Brazil attaches the utmost importance to the issue of the practices of the Council. Our current two-year mandate on the Council has only reinforced our perception that there is an urgent need for the Council to adopt a definitive set of rules of procedure and to observe them more faithfully. It is precisely because we attach such importance to the issue of working methods that a considerable portion of our own draft proposal was devoted to that question.

It is very clear that only through a comprehensive approach that deals with the issues of the Council's working methods and its composition will we, the Members of the United Nations, be able to succeed in bringing the Council more into harmony with its mandate and with the views and the needs of all Member States.

Progress achieved so far in the negotiations on the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Human Rights Council demonstrates the falseness of claims that the present consideration of the issue of Security Council reform somehow precludes forward movement on other important fronts of the institutional reform of the Organization.

As a matter of fact, one now faces the previously unimaginable possibility that those two proposals for institutional reform, on the Peacebuilding Commission and the Human Rights Council, could prosper without any corresponding developments on the composition and the working methods of the Security Council. That would be very detrimental to the Organization's balance and harmony and should therefore be avoided. We must ensure that progress is achieved in parallel on all aspects of institutional reform.

A few countries, seeking to avoid any decision on the matter, have taken refuge in appeals for consensus and in claims that the issue is "disruptive". However, their actions only contribute to the perpetuation of current inequalities in the structure of the Organization and to the frustration of the aspiration of all Members, in particular developing countries, to a more balanced distribution of power in the Security Council.

Others claim that what is a reasonable expansion of the Council would make it "unworkable" and would sacrifice the Council's efficiency and effectiveness. They fail to take into consideration that both efficiency and effectiveness are directly related to the perception of the legitimacy of the decisions that the Council takes, and that that, in turn, is a function of a representative composition.

It is time for the General Assembly to reach a decision on the issue of Security Council expansion. After 12 years of discussion and after months of consideration of concrete proposals, there can be no denying that the issue is well known to all and ripe for decision. With respect to the fact that such a decision will most probably be taken by a vote, it should be pointed out that this stems from the importance of the issue. That proven democratic method of coming to a decision should frighten no one.

Ms. Lintonen (Finland): At the outset, I would like to convey my delegation's deep condolences to the families of the victims of the bomb attacks that occurred yesterday in Jordan. We condemn in the strongest terms those heinous acts of terrorism targeting innocent civilians.

Let me thank the President of the Security Council for this month, Ambassador Denisov of the Russian Federation, for introducing the annual report of the Security Council (*A/60/2*). I would also like to commend the Secretariat for its efforts in producing the report.

We must seize this opportunity to further the goals of reform that were set for us in the 2005 World Summit Outcome (*resolution 60/1*). The momentum for institutional reform must not be lost. While stressing the importance of the revitalization of the General Assembly and the need to restore the political stature of the General Assembly and strengthen the role of the Economic and Social Council, Finland strongly supports the reform and the enlargement of the Security Council.

In our view, any reform of the Council must aim at increasing both its legitimacy and its effectiveness. To be truly effective in carrying out its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Council has to be seen as more legitimate by the wider membership of the Organization. At the same time, a more representative and thus more legitimate Council will, in the long run, be more effective in carrying out its functions.

Finland therefore supports an enlargement of the Council in both the permanent and the non-permanent categories. However, for the Council to be both effective and legitimate, the veto right should not, under any circumstances, be extended to new permanent members. Finland also strongly supports reform of the Council's working methods in order to make the Council more transparent, inclusive and accountable.

To conclude, I would like to reaffirm our support for the aspiration of Germany and Japan to become permanent members of an enlarged Security Council, and for making the Council more representative by including representatives of developing countries from the southern hemisphere.

Mr. Reyes Rodríguez (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Like preceding speakers, I would like to express Cuba's solidarity with those who today expressed their condolences for the victims of the recent terrorist attacks in Jordan. Cuba joins with those who have expressed solidarity with the people, the authorities and the families of the victims.

We thank the Permanent Representative of Russia, Ambassador Andrey Denisov, for his presentation of the annual report of the Security Council (*A/60/2*), as well as the other members of the Council and Secretariat staff for their efforts in preparing this voluminous document, submitted to the General Assembly in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations.

The report includes, once again, a brief summary, which is a positive adjustment to the format adopted in recent years. However, we believe that the report, precisely because it is such an important part of the Council's institutional memory, should be subject to ongoing, more thorough improvement in order to make it a document of greater analytical content.

Why not, for example, include the political and legal bases of at least the most important resolutions adopted by the Council? And why not include in the report what was not accomplished and the reasons for that, particularly for cases on which the Council was unable to act or clearly lacked unity? The report should provide a greater analysis of divided votes, especially for cases in which a permanent member cast a negative

vote. For example, in the period under consideration, the United States vetoed a draft resolution on the question of Palestine. Until changes can be made to the Council's current working methods, the annual report should include detailed information on the discussions held in closed meetings. In our opinion, it is necessary and urgent to make changes of that nature to the annual report.

Meanwhile, the General Assembly has yet to receive the special reports mentioned in Articles 15 and 24 of the Charter. If such special reports were submitted, all Member States would be able to review with the necessary frequency and thoroughness information relevant to the work of the Council, the principal organ, of limited membership, to which we have entrusted the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and which, in accordance with the Charter, acts in our name.

Therefore, it is vital to fully implement those General Assembly resolutions — for example, resolutions 51/193, 58/126 and 59/313 — that contain provisions to facilitate the Security Council's proper accounting of its activities to the Assembly, which the Member States have the legitimate right to receive.

There cannot be a genuine reform of the United Nations without a comprehensive reform of the Security Council, an organ where the principle of the sovereign equality of States is institutionally and flagrantly violated on a daily basis. It will not be possible to restore the rule of international law or make the Organization truly democratic as long as the Council exercises totalitarian powers. Nor will the Council recover its credibility and the legitimacy of its decisions as long as the super-Power continues to impose its will by the force of arms and the use of its money for blackmail.

We have often reaffirmed that the veto should be eliminated. But even after achieving the elimination of that unjust privilege, nothing will change if the reform leaves untouched the unacceptable, aggressive conduct and the hegemonic ambition of the world's most powerful country in terms of military and economic power, or fails to address the logic of domination and pillage that governs the essential processes of the international economic and financial system, disarmament and the precarious, temporary equilibrium of international security schemes. That set of factors prevents the majority of Council members from exercising their will and inhibits the General Assembly in its exercise of the considerable powers assigned to it by the Charter so that it can tackle the important challenges arising from the world's political, military and financial situation.

Therefore, until the ultimate objective of eliminating the veto can be achieved, it is necessary, as a first step in that direction, to limit the veto's use to actions taken under Chapter VII of the Charter.

The Security Council should be expanded to include new permanent and non-permanent members. The new permanent and non-permanent members joining the Council as part of this expansion should receive the same prerogatives as current permanent members. The basic objective of this expansion should be to correct the underrepresentation of developing countries in the Council's membership. Cuba believes that two or three countries from Africa, two or three countries from Latin America and the Caribbean, and two or three developing countries from Asia should join the Council as permanent members, with the same powers as current members, including the veto.

However, Council reform cannot be limited to the question of the increase of its membership. It must include proposals for achieving with urgency a deep transformation of its working methods in order to ensure the Council's democratic functioning and adequate transparency, including by taking the necessary steps to end the provisional nature of its rules of procedure.

Although one notes occasional efforts to increase the number of open meetings of the Council, in our opinion those meetings still do not offer a real opportunity for the points of view of countries that are not members of the Council to be properly taken into account. The informal briefings, of varying quality and frequency, carried out by the presidency and the subsequent monthly reviews are the only mechanisms that timidly allow us to obtain some information concerning what takes place in the Council's private consultations.

It is regrettable that the Council continues to carry out a great part of its work in closed meetings, particularly in informal consultations, which, when they are convened at the request of the most powerful of its members, cause peace-loving people throughout the world to lose sleep. That practice contravenes the

Council's own rules and has emphatically been called unacceptable by most States. In that context, we thank those members of the Council that have made concrete efforts to give us timely information on what is taking place in that principal organ.

Furthermore, the Council distorts the Charter's spirit and its provisions by means of its increasingly intrusive agenda, which usurps functions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. We note with concern the attempt to confer legislative powers on the Security Council, something that is beyond its mandate and is in clear violation of the most fundamental principles of the law of treaties. While the Council oversteps its area of competence on some issues, on others, regrettably and alarmingly, it maintains a continuous state of paralysis, such as on the current situation of the occupied Palestinian territories.

Before concluding, I would like to recall that during the fifty-ninth session of the Assembly, we saw that the issue of Security Council reform continues to be very sensitive. Today's joint debate and those of the preceding days provide another opportunity for a better understanding of the respective positions of Member States. We believe that the concerns, aspirations and specific proposals expressed here could be studied in greater depth to restart the work of the Assembly's Open-ended Working Group in order to finally make progress on the far-reaching, comprehensive and just reform of the Security Council.

Mr. Sumaida'ie (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I join preceding speakers in condemning the 9 November terrorist attacks in Amman, which killed and injured dozens of innocent civilians. On behalf of the Government and the people of Iraq, I express my condolences to the Government and the people of the brotherly country of Jordan and to the families of the victims. I express my appreciation to those who have condemned the terrorist attacks in Iraq and who have expressed their sympathy for the victims of daily terrorist acts. Terrorism has no homeland, nationality or religion. Terrorism can be defeated only by uniting our efforts in an international campaign to eliminate it.

The Open-ended Working Group on Council reform concluded its work and recommended that the item continue to be considered at the current session of the General Assembly. I take this opportunity to express my delegation's appreciation for the efforts of the President of the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session, Mr. Jean Ping, who so ably guided the activities of the Working Group.

It is more than ever necessary to reform the Security Council through an increase in its membership, a review of the items on its agenda and an improvement of its working methods, because the geo-political situation has changed dramatically since the United Nations was founded. We have to make sure that such reform can keep pace with the changes that have taken place.

The question of Security Council reform has been on the agenda of the General Assembly since 1993. During that time, some progress has been made in the discussion of the various ideas and courses of action. However, the Assembly has not been able to take critical decisions to adopt those proposals, except for the resolution setting out the required majority needed to take a decision on Security Council reform and related matters.

That failure can be attributed in part to the fact that all issues related to reform — in particular cluster II issues, on which there is some general consensus — have been linked to the issue of the increase in the Council's permanent and non-permanent membership. There continue to be profound differences on that particular issue, on which consultations reached a high point in the second half of this year, when we saw draft resolutions submitted to the General Assembly. While those draft resolutions touched on various cluster II issues, they focused mainly on an increase of the membership of the Council.

We believe that further improvement of the Council's working methods will bring us closer to agreement on the increase of its membership. My delegation reaffirms the need for Member States to strive to find common ground on the issue of the expansion of the Council's membership.

Delegations have put forward valuable opinions and views with the aim of making progress on general United Nations reform before moving on to the specific question of Security Council reform. The 2005 World Summit Outcome (*resolution 60/1*) adopted by heads of State and Government in September gave impetus to that line of action, especially as the outcome document placed no special emphasis on Security Council reform.

We now note that members of the United Nations are thoroughly preoccupied with the issue of establishing important structures that will contribute greatly to the reform of the Organization. In addition, the results and recommendations of the Independent Inquiry Committee of the "oil-for-food" programme have contributed to the reform of the Secretariat. It is necessary to improve transparency and accountability in the Secretariat and other organs in order to restore the credibility of the United Nations and to reassure Member States that they can entrust important funds to the United Nations and be confident that those funds will be spent responsibly and appropriately.

Like other delegations that have spoken on the issue of Security Council reform, my delegation believes that it is important to increase the Council's membership in a way that makes it more representative, that better reflects the greatly increased membership of the Organization over the past 60 years and that does not undermine the Council's efficiency and effectiveness. At the same time, however, my delegation attaches special importance to the cluster II issues on the improvement of the Council's working methods, because those issues affect the interests of all Member States, whereas the increase of the Council's membership, especially in the category of permanent members, affects the interests of only a limited number of States.

Since the fifty-seventh session, the Open-ended Working Group on Council reform has covered important ground in examining cluster II issues, on some of which there is agreement in principle. However, that agreement cannot be secured until it is incorporated into the Council's rules of procedure.

There are some cluster II issues that we wish to underline, foremost among which is the issue of sanctions regimes. I can speak of sanctions regimes from personal experience, because my country suffered the side effects of sanctions for 13 years and continues to suffer the consequences of those sanctions. We fully agree with the report of the Working-Group, which states that "sanctions should be designed in such a manner so that their long-term effects are considered and their effects on civilian populations are minimized or avoided on the basis of an assessment of humanitarian impact" (*A/59/47, Annex II, para. 16*).

My delegation wishes to underline that the purpose of sanctions, as set out in the Charter of the United Nations, is to rectify wrong action and modify the behaviour of regimes that the Security Council has found not to be in compliance with its resolutions. Sanctions are not to be used to undermine States or destroy their social fabric. Sanctions are to be an individual form of punishment that targets persons and regimes, and not a form of collective punishment that targets an entire population or country. We therefore believe that it is important to use the points agreed upon in that regard in the 2005 World Summit Outcome document to guide the Security Council's work in improving sanctions regimes.

With respect to the veto, we agree with those that prefer to add this issue to cluster II. We hope to see the use of the veto restricted as greatly as possible, first by limiting its use to issues that fall under Chapter VII of the Charter and, secondly, by adopting measures to place controls on its use.

We believe that the proposal contained in paragraph 257 of the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (*A/59/565*) for the introduction of a procedure of "indicative voting" in the Security Council would contribute to a greater elucidation of the reasons behind "no" votes and thus limit the use of the veto.

Another issue is that of the threat to international peace and security posed by terrorism — and the means to combat it. Since terrorism is a social phenomenon, it must be confronted with international participation. We therefore stress the importance of the Counter-Terrorism Committee and the Security Council Committee on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) and resolution 1540 (2004) respectively. States have a responsibility to fully cooperate with those two Committees. We believe it is necessary for these issues to receive the attention and sponsorship they deserve, first, because they account for a major portion of the Security Council agenda and, secondly, because improving the Committees' monitoring and implementation machinery and the subsequent implementation by countries of their obligations under the two resolutions would enhance the means of combating terrorism.

In that regard, strengthening communication and cooperation between regional organizations and the two Committees and enhancing related programmes

and mechanisms would further strengthen the effectiveness of international counter-terrorism efforts.

That leads us to the role of regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security. We believe it is important and pragmatic to ensure that regional organizations play their vital role in the resolution of regional conflicts and in peacebuilding. That means implementation of Chapter VIII of the Charter, while ensuring that there is no infringement upon the Security Council's obligations under the Charter. In addition, it would strengthen respect for and protection of human rights.

I wish in conclusion to note that the recent years have seen an increase in the number of Security Council meetings open to non-members. There has also been an increase in the participation of non-members in the Council's deliberations, when those deliberations pertain to the interests of those States. While we welcome such developments, we look forward to consolidating the practice in a manner that activates Article 31 of the Charter and that has a positive impact on openness and transparency in the work of the Council.

Mr. Skinner-Klée (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to begin by conveying our heartfelt condolences to the people and the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on the dreadful terrorist attacks that took place on 9 November in Amman, which have taken a heavy toll in innocent lives.

We wish to thank Ambassador Andrey Denisov, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, for introducing, in his capacity as President of the Security Council for the month of November, the Council's annual report (*A/60/2*).

Even though the link between the two items on which we are today holding a joint debate is obvious, we remain of the view that the report of the Security Council is sufficiently important to warrant separate consideration, particularly at a time when we are trying to find new ways to improve the principal organs of the Organization.

In that connection, it is interesting to highlight a curious point, namely the fact that the report of the Security Council is mentioned expressly in two distinct and separate provisions of the United Nations Charter: Article 15, paragraph 1, and Article 24, paragraph 3. These provisions are contained, respectively, in Chapters IV and V of the Charter, which are entirely devoted respectively to the General Assembly and to the Security Council.

It is also of interest to point out that, as far as substance is concerned, the former provision refers explicitly to the functions that the Security Council performs within the framework of Chapter VII, to maintain international peace and security.

From those characteristics of the Charter we infer the importance that its authors attached to the report of the Council: that it should reflect the developments that have taken place within the Council, which in turn should be the object of analysis and consideration by the General Assembly.

That should come as no surprise considering that the report is the only formal link between the General Assembly and the Security Council and that those two principal organs of the United Nations exercise functions and powers in the area of the maintenance of international peace and security. We should also be aware of the importance of that link as a means of ensuring the indispensable coordination and complementarity between the two organs' activities in that field, which, as the International Court of Justice has correctly observed, constitutes the most important of the purposes of the United Nations.

The Security Council's annual report to the General Assembly must therefore be more than a merely symbolic or ritualistic act. It should not just be a formal, procedural act but a matter of substance. In other words, it is not enough for the report barely to meet the minimum requirements to qualify as one, when in reality it is a mere outline, without even a detailed account of the votes that have taken place. The report should be the principal nexus between the two organs. And, above all, given the close relationship between the maintenance of peace and all the other functions of the United Nations, the report should be a tool enabling the General Assembly to fulfil its role as the principal deliberative and policy organ of the United Nations.

Guatemala appreciates the efforts that have been made to significantly improve, and even to slightly alter, the key characteristics of the introduction to the report. The report nevertheless continues to be predominantly a descriptive, routine collection of documents with its emphasis on a chronological

account of what the Council has done and what, as a matter of public record, has occurred within it.

Regrettably, the report lacks an evaluation of the difficulties, advances, setbacks and obstacles that have arisen in the Council's endeavours to resolve the conflicts that threaten international peace and security. Therefore, the report of the Council should become more substantial in order to promote a debate on how the future work of that organ can be improved.

Although the item on our agenda is the consideration of the report of the Security Council, we should not pass over in silence or refrain from stressing the fact that the report must cease to be nothing more than a bare record, a mere yearbook, and should become an annotated agenda on the Council's deliberations, reflecting the various positions taken and matters that have prompted debate.

In its present form, the report of the Council does not help us understand the nature of the situations that disrupt international peace and security. The lack of an analytical rather than chronological report means that questions affecting all of humanity are understood by less than one tenth of the membership of the United Nations. In an interdependent and globalized world, that is an anachronism that does not serve the purposes of the Organization. It is a practice that we must review in order to adopt methods of work that impart greater transparency to the deliberations of the Security Council, which will not only make the maintenance of international peace and security more viable but also advance the promotion of friendly relations between nations and strengthen the international cooperation that is required for resolving the problems that plague humanity.

To be sure, in one area that is of particular importance to my delegation — the transparency of the Council's working methods and achieving closer interchange with States not represented on it — the Council has made significant progress. But there is room for more progress. In particular, we must extend, as much as possible, the practice of holding public meetings of the Council, with the greatest possible number of interested parties in attendance.

Guatemala is firmly committed to the process of United Nations reform, as laid down in the Millennium Declaration (*resolution 55/2*) and the 2005 World Summit Outcome (*resolution 60/1*). The question of reforming the United Nations system has given rise to the most heated debates during the past few months of the work of the Assembly.

We trust that significant advances will be possible in realizing this necessary and urgent reform, advances that will take into account all the institutions and mechanisms of the Organization, wherever improved and more efficient functioning is needed. Guatemala is ready to contribute to the process with ideas and by taking part in a constructive dialogue with all Member States.

We are grateful for initiatives such as that of the representatives of Costa Rica, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Singapore and Switzerland in connection with a draft resolution on improving the working methods of the Council. Guatemala appreciates their proposal. We feel that such contributions will unquestionably enrich the dialogue among Member States and will activate the process of implementing the 2005 World Summit Outcome (*resolution 60/1*).

Before briefly touching upon some of the principles that inform my delegation's views on the subject of Security Council reform, I wish to convey my gratitude to the former President of the General Assembly, Mr. Jean Ping, for his leadership in the work of the Open-ended Working Group, as well as to the Vice-Chairpersons of that body, the representative of the Bahamas, Ms. Paulette Bethel, and the representative of Liechtenstein, Mr. Christian Wenaweser. The Working Group's report has provided very interesting information, analysis and reflection on the issue that concerns us today.

For Guatemala, Security Council reform is a crucial element, but one that is inevitably linked to the wider process of United Nations reform. An effective collective security system necessarily requires the comprehensive strengthening of multilateralism and the United Nations. This is why, in our view, Security Council reform should not concentrate solely on increasing the number of members; it should also include a comprehensive review of the Council's working methods and the decision-making process.

I wish to reiterate my country's conviction that the Council needs to be more representative, transparent and efficient. That is why we advocate an increase in its membership. We agree that such an increase should apply to both categories of membership — permanent and non-permanent — taking special care to ensure adequate geographical

representation and the inclusion of both developed and developing countries.

Guatemala favours continuing efforts to make the Council more open and accessible, in the interest of greater transparency, so as to demonstrate that, as the Charter specifies, the Council is truly acting "on ... behalf" of Member States and, accordingly, in the interest of the international community — and enjoying at all times the valuable contributions of interested States.

We support better coordination among the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council so as to guarantee continuity in the Organization's peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities, always preserving the responsibilities and powers specific to each United Nations organ, in conformity with the Charter.

We would also like to see an analysis of relations with the other principal organs of the United Nations. Here, we consider that reference should have been made to the experience gained from the Economic and Social Council's ad hoc advisory groups — on African countries emerging from conflict, such as Guinea-Bissau and Burundi, and on Haiti. Through their own mechanisms, these have improved coordination between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. We believe that this has helped promote a holistic focus responding to both security issues and economic issues in the transition and recovery phases.

Finally, Guatemala reaffirms its commitment to participate actively in the future discussions on Security Council reform. That goes hand in hand with our aspiration to be elected next year by the Assembly, for the first time, to a non-permanent seat on the Security Council, which will enable us to continue to contribute to the process of reforming the working methods of the Council.

Mr. Lidén (Sweden): First of all, I wish to express my sincere condolences to the delegation of Jordan and to the families and friends of all of the victims of the terrorist attacks that took place in Amman. The Swedish Government condemns, in the strongest possible terms, those who planned and carried out that horrible crime.

Two months ago, we took important steps to reform the United Nations. Once implemented, those decisions will strengthen our ability to cope with current global threats and challenges. The 2005 High-level Plenary Meeting clearly spelled out the need for early reform of the Security Council in order to make it more broadly representative, efficient and transparent. Equally important, reform of the Security Council was seen as part of the overall effort to reform the United Nations.

We are pleased that negotiations are now under way on several of the reform issues. But we must also proceed to address the outstanding ones. We therefore welcome today's debate on the crucial issue of Security Council reform.

Sweden is among the Member States that have advocated reform of the Security Council since the early 1990s. For the Security Council to remain the primary body in our collective security system, its legitimacy and effectiveness must be assured.

Sweden believes that, on the one hand, the Security Council should be expanded, allowing stronger representation from Africa, Asia and Latin America. On the other hand, the Security Council must be an effective body that can act quickly and in a transparent way. We therefore believe that the veto power should not be extended to new members. Instead, a veto-free culture should be promoted. Furthermore, the Security Council's working methods, its transparency and its dialogue with other United Nations bodies must be strengthened. We welcome the efforts to that end by the delegations of Costa Rica, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Singapore and Switzerland.

By the end of the year, we should come to an agreement on how we can invigorate the process and carry it forward into 2006. As Sweden has said many times before, non-action on this matter is not an option. For our part, we are ready to contribute to finding a solution that will be broadly accepted and thus seen as truly legitimate.

After years of debate, we much reach an agreement on reform of the Security Council. Let us use the momentum of the High-level Plenary Meeting to continue to move forward on this issue. In the end, our global response to the threats and challenges of today will depend on our resolve to reform the United Nations, including the body that has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Mrs. Holguín (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to add our voice of rejection and condemnation in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks in Jordan. We reaffirm our support and solidarity to the Government and the people of Jordan.

We would like to thank Ambassador Denisov, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation and current President of the Security Council, for having introduced the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly (*A/60/2*). The report reviews all the situations considered in the Council. It depicts the complexity of those situations, particularly in Africa and in the Middle East. We support every effort to achieve stability and peace in those regions. We acknowledge the work of the Council during this particularly complex reporting period.

As in previous years, I would like to reiterate that we would have preferred to see a document including not only a summary of the questions under consideration, but also with some content on the Council's decision-making process.

We support the progress made on the issue of counter-terrorism and commend the chairmen of the committees for their work. We believe that we must not lose our initial enthusiasm, since that issue is key to world peace and security. There is no doubt that meaningful progress has been made and that support mechanisms for States seeking assistance in efficiently combating terrorism should be strengthened and consolidated in order to continue enhancing the global fight through multilateralism.

We also welcome the field missions undertaken by the Council. We believe that they are a way to learn about and understand realities in their true context and scope, based on clear and first-hand information. They will allow us to take more appropriate decisions and to find proper solutions to every situation.

In that regard, we acknowledge the work undertaken by the Ambassador of Brazil, Mr. Ronaldo Mota Sardenberg, during that Council's mission to Haiti. The situation in Haiti requires a coordinated and long-term effort by the United Nations to strengthen democratic institutions there and to draw up a sustainable and comprehensive development strategy that would ensure the economic and social progress and well-being of the people, as well as political stability in a secure and peaceful environment. The Council must lead the first phase of stabilization and the United Nations system must respond through economic development programmes that promote sustainability in the efforts and commitments made by the Haitian authorities and the international community in its support and cooperation.

We believe that a review of the Council's working methods to promote transparency and the participation of non-member States is essential, especially given that, as stated in the report,

> "The past 12 months reaffirmed the trend observed in recent years towards a continuous increase in the volume and scope of the activities of the Security Council." (*A/60/2, p. 1*)

That continuous increase in the activities of the Council warrants broader consultation with Member States, regional groups and other relevant actors in order to allow the Council to take better informed decisions aimed at finding viable and definitive resolutions for certain situations.

In order to ensure effectiveness and successful results, the Council must focus on threats to international peace and security. Opening the agenda to items not directly related to its core mandate could affect its efficiency and reliability in the exercise of its duties. Just as the Arria Formula has proven its worth during the Council's consultations with non-governmental organizations and members of civil society, we believe that it is necessary and urgent to seek a similar formula for holding consultations with States. It could be implemented immediately and would require only the Council's willingness to do so. A formula to enable States to address substantive issues alongside the Council would help Council members to gain access to broader and more accurate information on national and regional realities, which could only help the Council to take decisions that are more appropriate to particular contexts and thus find lasting solutions to issues under consideration.

In seeking sustainable solutions, its main objective, we believe that the Council should broaden its focus on the follow-up to situations on its agenda. Monitoring alone will not help to solve problems. We believe that the Council must also propose suggestions to the system so that it can mobilize, design and carry out impact projects to contribute to solving crises. A better identification of national needs will help the Council better to address crises and find lasting solutions.

With respect to the issue of working methods, we believe that broad consultations would help in the drafting of proposals to improve the Council's actions in exercise of its mandate. In that regard, we believe that the initiative of Costa Rica, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Singapore and Switzerland to invite Member States to discuss that issue is constructive, and we are open to discussing it as a new element that could enrich our debate.

I reaffirm my country's commitment to reforming the Council's composition pursuant to the guidelines and proposals submitted by the Uniting for Consensus group and contained in document A/59/L.68. That proposal has major strengths. It is flexible, democratic, open and participatory and has a regional dimension that is unique in this debate. It would prevent the widening of differences within the multilateral system. We believe that Security Council reform falls within the larger reform being undertaken. We have expended a great deal of time and energy on the issue in the past, and it has distracted us from other issues of great importance to most of our countries.

We welcome the focus of the presidency of Mr. Jan Eliasson on reforms that will meet the needs and alleviate the problems of peoples, which are ultimately those who must benefit from the decisions we take here. We believe that the major challenges the United Nations faces require unity among all its Members if it is to be respond efficiently and effectively to the world's great tests. It must seek unity, cooperation and consensus among its Members. Those essential elements should be our guidelines throughout the reform process, including that of the Security Council's working methods and expansion.

Ms. Moses (Nauru): On behalf of the Government and people of Nauru, I wish to express our deepest sympathy to the Government and people of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for the tragic loss of lives in the terrorist attacks in Amman.

My delegation thanks you, Sir, for the opportunity to discuss agenda item 9, "Report of the Security Council", and agenda item 117, "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters".

I shall restrict my remarks to agenda item 117.

Nauru strongly believes that the reform of the Security Council lies with the need to recognize the intrinsic connection between the pillars that uphold the United Nations system. In that regard, we are disappointed by the relative inaction by Member States in seeking progress on Security Council reform.

Nauru welcomes the high priority accorded to the development agenda at the world summit. Comprehensive work has been carried out on the establishment of a human rights council. Texts are now being discussed for the establishment of a peacebuilding commission.

Equally important is the need to reform the Security Council and to recognize that international development since the establishment of that body many decades ago now demands a more democratic representation of the global family in an expanded Security Council. The earlier those reforms are implemented, the earlier the work of the United Nations can be further improved. Security Council reform must occur simultaneously with the establishment of the human rights council and the peacebuilding commission, and with United Nations management reforms. Otherwise, the pillars upon which this body was founded will not hold up to the challenges of the twenty-first century.

Nauru co-sponsored the reform proposal by the G-4 countries contained in document A/59/L.64, which was introduced at the fifty-ninth session. It is my delegation's strong view that this is still the only draft resolution that provides a proper and complete framework for change and to improve the current structure of the Security Council. It is the only draft resolution that protects the interests of all States, large and small, showing no bias to any particular region or group. My delegation would further welcome its reintroduction at the sixtieth session of the General Assembly.

Nauru reaffirms its position that an expanded Security Council must include Brazil, Germany, India and Japan. Ultimately, the success of the United Nations will depend on a reformed and enlarged Security Council.

Mr. Maema (Lesotho): We wish to join the many voices that have condemned the terrorist bombings in Amman, Jordan, and on behalf of the Government and the people of Lesotho, I convey our deepest sympathy

and condolences to the victims of the attacks, their families, and the people and the Government of Jordan.

Let me express my delegation's appreciation to the President of the Security Council for the month of November 2005, Mr. Andrey Denisov, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation, for introducing the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly.

The delegation of Lesotho fully associates itself with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Nigeria on behalf of the African Group. However, we wish to highlight a few issues that are of particular interest to Lesotho.

We have noted an improvement in the quality and content of the report of the Security Council. My delegation welcomes improvements made in the working methods of the Council, particularly the increase in the number of meetings held in public. However, we believe that there still exists room for further improvement. Indeed, the need for the Security Council to enhance its accountability to the entire United Nations membership and to increase the transparency of its work was reiterated by the heads of State and Government at the recent millennium review summit in September.

My delegation therefore welcomes progress made over the years, though it has been very slow, by the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council, particularly under cluster II concerning the working methods of the Council and the transparency of its work. At this juncture, let me congratulate Ambassadors Paulette Bethel of the Bahamas and Christian Wenaweser of Liechtenstein, the two Vice-Chairpersons of the Working Group, for the magnificent manner in which they steered deliberations on very complex issues in the Working Group, and also for preparing a concise report. My delegation looks forward to future deliberations of the Working Group. We sincerely hope they will be approached with renewed spirits, particularly after the recent review summit.

Furthermore, my delegation wishes to express its appreciation for proposals contained in the informal paper circulated by Costa Rica, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Singapore and Switzerland on the working methods of the Council. In our view, the paper provides a useful basis on which the United Nations membership can further build.

The Kingdom of Lesotho continues to believe that the issues of the working methods of the Council and of the expansion of its membership are both capable of resolution. What is required is the necessary political will and genuine commitment to making tangible progress on those issues. In September, heads of State and Government requested the General Assembly to review progress on the reform of the Security Council by the end of this year. They reiterated the fact that the Council has to be, among other things, broadly representative and more legitimate.

The report of the Security Council confirms the fact that, as has been the case in previous years, the Council was in the past year mostly preoccupied by crises in Africa. It is therefore a hard fact that Africa's representation in the Security Council needs to be enhanced to reflect the continent's interests and perceptions. The Common African Position, as contained in the Ezulwini Consensus and in the Sirte Declaration, is well known. It calls for two permanent seats, with the prerogatives and privileges of permanent membership, and five non-permanent seats for Africa. We therefore appeal to this body to heed Africa's call for support for its position, for it is driven not by the interests of one country, but by a strong desire to empower a region facing various crises relating to international peace and security.

Mr. Berruga (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I would like to express to the people and Government of Jordan Mexico's deepest condolences and condemnation of the despicable terrorist attacks perpetrated two days ago in Amman. At this difficult time, we affirm our solidarity towards our Jordanian friends.

Throughout last year, Security Council reform occupied a salient place in the discussions of the Members of the United Nations. At the outset of this new round of consultations, it seems worthwhile asking ourselves: Why does that issue prompt such priority interest? There are three possible explanations.

The first is that the Security Council is the organ that is showing the clearest symptoms of being in crisis and that therefore requires the most urgent attention. That is highly debatable. The Security Council may not necessarily be the organ in the most critical situation.

The second reason is that the Security Council has consolidated itself as the most influential organ of the United Nations and that any alteration to it will therefore have important repercussions on the general functioning of the system. That assumption appears to be closer to reality.

The third reason — of a more political nature — is that the international balance of power is currently subject to revision. That would explain the sharp interest being shown in the issues of its composition, number of seats and categories — permanent and non-permanent — of new membership. We may therefore assume that those States occupying a seat in the new structure would enjoy some sort of confirmation of the position they occupy on the world scene. That assumption could also explain why little attention has been given to other Security Council reform issues, such as its working methods and its real capacity to deal with the new threats to international peace and security.

Those three assumptions could bring greater objectivity to the reactivation of Security Council reform. In any case, it is clear that the exposure enjoyed by that issue during the months leading to the summit overshadowed our vision and diverted our attention from other reform matters of equally major importance.

We now face the challenge of making headway in that most sensitive issue without neglecting issues of overall reform. In order to achieve that two-fold purpose, it would seem advisable to draw lessons from the consultations and debates of the recent past. Beginning today, our efforts to reform the Security Council have an opportunity to be launched with a fresh vision, to avoid polarization among Members and to rebuild an organ better equipped to tackle the main threats to international peace and security.

Beyond its final composition, we cannot afford to ignore the fact that the new Security Council will be judged by its results and by its capacity to exert a positive influence on international realities. That is why, in inaugurating this new round of discussions, we must ensure that the substance of the Security Council's raison d'être prevails over its institutional and structural arrangements. We will have failed if the reform of the Security Council does not translate into greater guarantees for the maintenance of international peace and security. We will have wasted an unprecedented opportunity to build a Security Council fit to meet the current and future necessities of the world.

Security Council reform has no alternative but to focus on creating the best collective security system possible. At the end of the day, our nations will have to assess and judge whether we have attained a visionary reform able to respond to the major threats of this era. That judgement will be based on the Security Council's efficiency in resolving conflicts in the field and its capacity to improve the security of our peoples. It will also be based on the support and legitimacy that its decisions and mandates enjoy in the eyes of the world community. If it is to meet those conditions — efficiency, legitimacy and accountability — the reform of the Security Council must be a product of broad intergovernmental negotiation in which the current deficiencies of the system and of the collective strategies to address threats are clearly exposed.

Mexico believes that we will have taken a major step if the progress report requested of the President of the General Assembly by our leaders at the summit can accurately pinpoint the system's principal shortcomings, the major flaws of the sanction regimes, the key issues concerning peacekeeping operations, and the mediation capacity and accountability mechanisms of the Security Council, inter alia. Considering the lessons learned in the past year, we can state that it will be futile and useless to try to reform a main organ of the United Nations without a shared diagnosis of its needs, bottlenecks and real capacity to fulfil its most sensitive tasks. Without such a diagnosis, we cannot understand the operational problems of the Council that we are trying to resolve. In short, the Security Council reform process should adjust itself to a logic and dynamic that would ensure the delivery of relevant results and resolve the real problems.

In that respect, my delegation feels that the initiative proposed by Costa Rica, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Singapore and Switzerland is a step in the right direction. That effort underscores the central questions of the Council's functionality and operations. If duly complemented by the diagnosis and negotiations that Mexico is proposing, we believe that the progress report that has been requested in the summit's outcome document will be of special value, since it could serve as a useful basis for the decision-making process regarding Security Council reform.

Mr. Matulay (Slovakia): The Government of Slovakia joins other members of the international community in expressing its utter abhorrence and condemnation of the multiple attacks perpetrated in Jordan's capital, Amman. The people and Government of Slovakia are greatly shocked by that hideous act of terrorism and express deep sympathy for the bereaved families and friends of the victims.

Slovakia strongly condemns terrorism in all of its forms and manifestations, particularly indiscriminate terror against innocent civilians. We must continue to fulfil our obligations in enhancing measures to eliminate international terrorism, including the adoption of a comprehensive convention on terrorism and a counter-terrorism strategy.

I would like to convey my delegation's appreciation to the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation, Ambassador Andrey Denisov, President of the Security Council for the month of November, for his comprehensive introduction of this year's Security Council report to the General Assembly. We also wish to thank the members of the Secretariat for their efforts in preparing the report.

A comprehensive reform of the Security Council, the organ of the United Nations principally responsible for maintaining international peace and security, is vital to our Organization's success at a time when global challenges and problems require strong and thorough international management and functioning multilateral diplomacy.

At this year's world summit, many heads of State and Government addressed the reform of the Security Council. Their views were mostly focused on the expansion of the Council's membership. As we have repeatedly expressed on previous occasions, Slovakia is firmly committed to reform of the Security Council. First of all, it needs to be made more representative, more effective and more transparent.

In that context, we believe that the Security Council needs to be enlarged in both the permanent and non-permanent categories of membership. The present membership structure is clearly unbalanced and does not truly reflect the current situation in the world in a number of aspects. It would seem only appropriate that enlargement in the permanent category also include countries of the global South. Only such an expansion can rectify the existing imbalance in the composition of the Council. We duly note that several developing and industrialized countries that possess political and economic potential have a claim on permanent membership.

We wish to reiterate our position that an enlarged Security Council should include Germany and Japan as new permanent members. We also wish to emphasize that all existing regional groups should be maintained and able to nominate candidates for membership of the enlarged Security Council.

In addition to its composition, the working methods of the Security Council need to be enhanced. Some progress has already been made towards making the work of the Security Council more transparent. A number of decisions have been taken by the Council itself with regard to reforming its own procedures in an effort to increase and promote the transparency of its deliberative process and its accountability to the wider membership. Other proposals and initiatives have been introduced to increase efficiency.

The reform of the United Nations is not an easy process, but unless we reform its most powerful organ, it will remain unfinished business. Despite the major obstacles to be overcome, we should not relent in our efforts to achieve a meaningful reform of the Security Council so that it can continue to play an effective role as the main body safeguarding the maintenance of international peace and security.

In conclusion, I would like to assure you, Sir, and States Members of the United Nations that, during its upcoming tenure as a non-permanent member of the Security Council in 2006 and 2007, Slovakia will spare no effort in contributing with its own share of responsibility to making the Security Council as effective and efficient as possible.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.